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ALL EYES ON BRAZIL

- Countdown to the World Cup draw
- Will the hosts *really* be ready?

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Neymar's bright start at Barcelona

FRANK DE BOER

"The Ajax way"

PLUS ● STARS OF THE UNDER-17 WORLD CUP ● LARS LAGERBACK ● SENEGAL 2002 ● LA LIGA SQUADS

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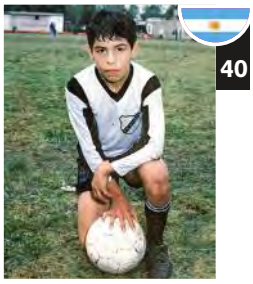

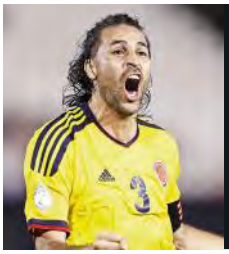

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In Pictures

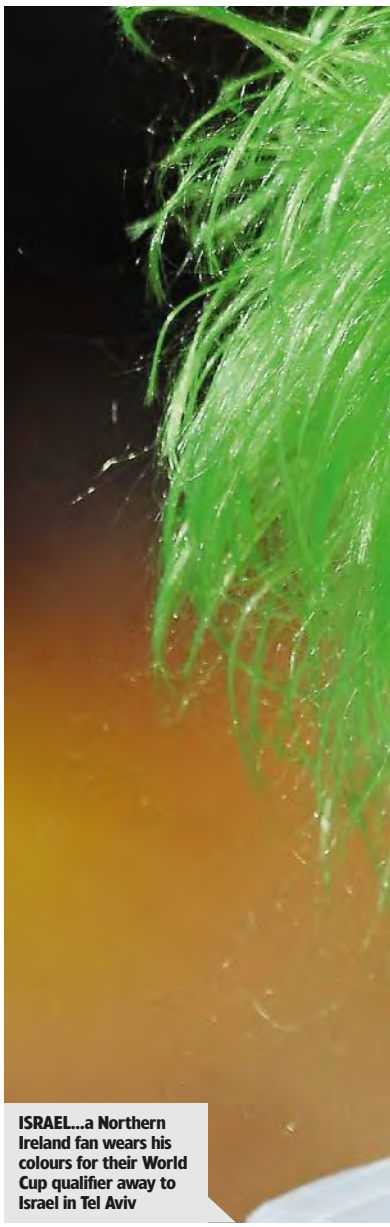
The global game caught on camera

SPAIN...Athletic Bilbao's Aymeric Laporte (left) and Mikel San Jose collide as David Villa of Atletico Madrid takes a tumble

BRAZIL...Hernane of Flamengo celebrates a goal against Botafogo in the Brazilian Cup in front of his home fans at the Maracana

RUSSIA...Manchester City substitutes Joleon Lescott (left) and Mica Richards wrap up warm while on the bench for their Champions League game away to CSKA Moscow

ITALY...Real Madrid's Gareth Bale celebrates his goal against Juventus in the Champions League



ISRAEL...a Northern Ireland fan wears his colours for their World Cup qualifier away to Israel in Tel Aviv

SERBIA...Partizan fans start a fire in the stands during their team's Belgrade derby with Red Star

PORTUGAL...Israel players take evasive action as a Cristiano Ronaldo free-kick comes their way in a World Cup qualifier

PICTURES OF THE MONTH QR CODE

To see more of the best photos from the month, scan the QR code using any free QR reader that can be downloaded to your smartphone. You can also see the images by logging on to bit.ly/1b8ErQj

FROM THE EDITOR

All eyes are on Brazil for the 2014 World Cup draw but, as Tim Vickery reports (page 22), the football is in danger of being overshadowed by events off the pitch. The build-up to every World Cup is accompanied by discussions over the preparations, but Brazil 2014 is proving far more problematic than any previous finals.

The difficulties being faced by Brazil 2014 are the inevitable consequence of FIFA politicians placing their own interests before those of the wider game. The World Cup was long ago hijacked by the likes of Joao Havelange and Sepp Blatter, who used the competition's expansion to consolidate support in Africa, Asia and Central America. Now we can add Michel Platini to the list, following his suggestion that the finals could be expanded to 40 teams.

> The World Cup was long ago hijacked by the likes of Joao Havelange and Sepp Blatter...now we can add Michel Platini to the list

Platini, who lit up the world stage so brilliantly as a player, may be playing a game of poker with Blatter over their future ambitions. But with every silly suggestion from Platini and Blatter (Platter? Blatini?), the World Cup loses a little of its lustre.

But back to the football. We'll have full analysis of the draw next month, along with the winners of our annual awards for World Player, Manager and Team of the Year. For those outside the UK, our digital edition is available when the UK edition goes on sale.

Gavin Hamilton, Editor

10 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS THIS MONTH

1 Iceland make the World Cup play-offs ..... page 32
2 Barcelona win first Clasico of a new era ..... page 28
3 Platini's World Cup plan is latest salvo in battle with Blatter ..... page 68
4 Soccerex conference in Rio de Janeiro is cancelled amid World Cup concerns ..... page 9 and 22
5 Atletico Mineiro prepare for the Club World Cup ..... page 50
6 Problems with over-age players dog Under-17 World Cup ..... page 35
7 Alex Ferguson's autobiography is published ..... page 18
8 Roma's unbeaten Serie A run ends ..... page 30
9 Arsenal win silverware in Argentina ..... page 34
10 Diego Costa opts for Spain over Brazil ..... page 8

SPAIN

Diego Costa opts for Spain over Brazil

Atletico Madrid striker Diego Costa was called up for Spain's November friendlies against Equatorial Guinea and South Africa after he rejected his home country Brazil.

The player made his Brazil debut earlier this year, in a friendly against Switzerland, but then became embroiled in a tug of war for international services.

"We have done things naturally, and followed the regulations," said Spain coach Vicente Del Bosque. "He meets all the requirements. It is his decision. He wanted to play with Spain."

Unsurprisingly, Del Bosque's Brazil counterpart Luiz Felipe Scolari was not impressed with the player's decision. "Anyone who doesn't want to play for Brazil, automatically discharges himself. He turns his back on his country," he was reported as saying.

Costa has been the top scorer in the Spanish Liga this season, with 13 goals in 12 appearances for Atletico.

Choice...Costa wants to play for Spain at international level

ITALY

Match abandoned as players

Another one...a Nocerina player is injured

A match in Italy's third tier was abandoned after 20 minutes after one side went down with a series of mystery injuries, leaving them with six players and forcing the referee to stop the game.

The local derby between Lega Pro sides Salernitana and Nocerina had already started 40 minutes late because the Nocerina players refused to get off their team bus, fearing reprisals from their own fans.

Eventually, Nocerina agreed to play

"You might have been led to believe FIFA is the evil Sheriff of Nottingham of football. But the truth is we have more in common with Robin Hood"

Sepp Blatter gets carried away when addressing the Oxford Union

Cancelled...Soccerex before it was closed down

BRAZIL

Soccerex to sue Rio government over cancellation

The organisers of Soccerex plan to sue Rio de Janeiro's state government after it pulled its financial support for a football convention that was due to be staged in the city in the week before the forthcoming World Cup draw.

Soccerex said the Rio state government had withdrawn support because of "ongoing civic unrest" and accused it of making a political decision because they feared protests similar to those during the Confederations Cup.

The Rio state government responded by saying the cancellation was due to a financial dispute, not security reasons.

They commented: "Soccerex were advised to seek funding to host the event so that the state would not have to use public money."

• *Brazil 2014: special report, page 22*

fear angry fans

but made three substitutions in two minutes. Over the next 17 minutes, five more players left the pitch with "injuries".

Nocerina also had a player sent off along with one of Salernitana following a scuffle. That left Nocerina with just six players on the pitch, forcing the match to be abandoned.

Reports suggested that Nocerina supporters, angry at having been banned from attending the match, threatened their players in a bid to stop the game going ahead.

HEROES & VILLAINS

ASMIR BEGOVIC

Not only did he become only the fifth goalkeeper to score in the Premier League, his goal for Stoke City against Southampton after 13 seconds was the fourth-quickest of all time in the competition.

Quick keeper...Begovic

GIUSEPPE ROSSI

A hat-trick in 15 second-half minutes inspired Fiorentina to overturn a two-goal half-time deficit at home to Juventus, to secure a 4-2 win and inflict the first league defeat of the season on Antonio Conte's reigning champions.

JERMAIN DEFOE

Broke Martin Chivers' long-standing European goals record for Tottenham Hotspur when he scored his 23rd for the club in European competition.

ANDREJ KRAMARIC

The Croatian under-21 striker broke his country's domestic scoring record when he netted eight times for his club side, Rijeka, in their 11-0 Croatian Cup win against third division Zmaj Blato.

Historic...Kramaric scored eight goals in one game

NELSON VIVAS

The coach of Argentinian club Quilmes was forced to resign after attacking one of his own fans in the stands at the end of a 1-1 draw with Atletico Rafaela. "I'm not a violent person but I realise that's not the image a trainer should give," Vivas told reporters after landing three punches on a supporter who he claimed had been insulting him.

HECTOR HERRERA

Porto's Mexican midfielder received two yellow cards in the first six minutes of his side's 1-0 Champions League loss to Zenit to earn the quickest-ever dismissal for a double caution in the competition's history.

Dismissed...Herrera (far right) sees red

CSKA MOSCOW

Will have part of their ground closed for the Champions League game against Bayern Munich after fans racially abused Manchester City's Yaya Toure.

VINCENT TAN

The Cardiff City owner replaced the club's head of recruitment Iain Moody with Alisher Apsalyamov, the 23-year-old son of one of Tan's friends. Apsalyamov was on work experience at the club during the summer.

"Passion is more important than tactics and undoubtedly Dortmund are the most passionate team in Europe right now"

Standard Liege's Israeli coach Guy Luzon scores a bullseye with his take on the work of Borussia Dortmund's Jurgen Klopp

GOALS we'd like to see again

To see video footage of these goals, and many more that we have selected, scan the QR code using any free QR reader that can be downloaded to your smartphone. You can also see the videos by logging on to bit.ly/HDUVsP

1 ZLATAN IBRAHIMOVIC
Paris Saint-Germain v Bastia
An amazing back-heel scorpion kick into the top corner.

2 ALEXIS SANCHEZ
Barcelona v Real Madrid
Chips the goalkeeper from the edge of the penalty area for Barca's second goal in the *Clasico*.

3 MIKE VAN DUINEN
Den Haag v Twente
Dribbles the ball from inside his own half, beating two men, before finishing with a powerful shot into the top corner.

4 PAJTIM KASAMI
Fulham v Crystal Palace
Controls a long ball on his chest before turning and volleying, in one movement, into the far corner.

5 RAUL JIMENEZ
Mexico v Panama
A stunning overhead kick from just inside the penalty area with five minutes left of Mexico's crucial World Cup qualifier at home to Panama seals a 2-1 victory for the hosts and keeps alive their hopes of reaching next summer's finals.

6 JACK WILSHERE
Arsenal v Norwich City
A fantastic move of one-touch passes and deft volleys featuring Santi Cazorla and Olivier Giroud, and finished off by Wilshere.

WINNERS

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA
A 1-0 win against Lithuania secured a ticket to the 2014 World Cup in Brazil – their first appearance at a major finals.

PETER EDWARDS
Won £125,000 when grandson Harry Wilson (right) won his first Wales cap, having bet £50 when the boy was 18 months old.

ROMA
Set a Serie A record of nine wins in a row at the start of a season. The run ended two games later with a 1-1 draw at Torino.

LOSERS

PANAMA
Missed out on a World Cup play-off with New Zealand by letting in two added-time goals and losing 3-2 to USA, which meant Mexico claimed fourth place.

ADMIRA WACKER
The Austrians were deducted eight points for breaching licensing regulations, leaving them bottom of the league.

HOLGER OSIECK
Despite leading Australia to the World Cup, he was sacked after 6-0 defeats by Brazil and France.

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"He's no longer a child. He's 23 and he must change"

Mario Balotelli's three-match ban for insulting a referee leaves Milan coach Massimiliano Allegri fuming

15 MATCHES THAT MATTERED

Recent crunch games from around the globe

NORWAY 1
ICELAND 1
Slovenia's inability to win in Switzerland, coupled with Kolbeinn Sigthorsson's goal in Oslo, put Iceland into the World Cup play-offs.

LITHUANIA 0
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA 1
Vedad Ibisevic's second-half goal in Kaunas meant that Bosnia are in the finals of a major tournament for the first time in their history.

GHANA 6
EGYPT 1
In the pick of the final round of African World Cup qualifiers, this tie was thought to be too close to call. But Kwasi Appiah's Ghana side soon put paid to that.

PANAMA 2
USA 3
Two late USA goals in added time cost Panama any chance of a first World Cup qualification, and sent Mexico into a play-off with New Zealand.

ESPERANCE 1
ORLANDO PIRATES 1
South Africa's Pirates went through to the CAF Champions League Final for the first time in 18 years, winning on away goals after a 1-1 draw in Tunisia.

AL AHLY 1
COTON SPORT 1
(Al Ahly won 7-6 on penalties)
The defending champions reached the CAF Champions League Final after Jacques Haman missed his spot-kick.

FIORENTINA 4
JUVENTUS 2
Juve were beaten in the league for the first time this season, when a Giuseppe Rossi hat-trick in the second half helped to overturn a 2-0 interval deficit.

UNIVERSIDAD CATOLICA 3
SAO PAULO 4
Despite the scoreline, the reigning champions had goalkeeper Rogerio Ceni to thank for their place in the quarter-finals of the Sudamericana Cup.

SCHALKE 1
BORUSSIA DORTMUND 3
Beaten twice by their bitter rivals last season, Jurgen Klopp's side made amends in the first Ruhr derby of this term, winning convincingly at the Veltins Arena.

SEOUL 2
GUANGZHOU EVERGRANDE 2
Dejan Damjanovic scored a late equaliser as the hosts salvaged a draw from the first leg of their AFC Champions League Final against Guangzhou Evergrande.

ORLANDO PIRATES 1
AL AHLY 1
Pirates held the defending champions to a draw in the opening leg of the CAF Champions League Final in Johannesburg.

HOFFENHEIM 1
BAYERN MUNICH 2
Bayern's victory saw them equal the all-time Bundesliga record of 36 consecutive games unbeaten, set by Hamburg between January 1982 and January 1983.

ROMA 2
NAPOLI 0
First beat second as, after eight games, Rudi Garcia's side maintained their 100 per cent start to the Serie A season with two goals from Miralem Pjanic.

KAIZER CHIEFS 1
ORLANDO PIRATES 1
A crowd of 80,000 at Soccer City saw it end honours even in the Soweto derby as Chiefs' Kingston Nkhatha cancelled out Kermit Erasmus' opener.

LILLE 2
MONACO 0
Monaco were beaten in the league for the first time this season as Lille leap-frogged them into second position behind Paris Saint-Germain.

David CONN

AT THE HEART OF THE GAME

Derby rivals at opposite ends of the spectrum

Cardiff City beat Swansea City 1-0 in the first Welsh derby to be played in English football's top flight, a clash which embodies opposing visions of British football clubs' characters and constitutions in this modern era.

Swansea were rebuilt from insolvency a decade ago by an alliance of their supporters trust and businessmen who are all – with the exception of one investor, Brian Katzen – lifelong fans. Huw Jenkins, the chairman primarily responsible for the enlightened manager and player recruitment which has endowed their ascent with their eye-pleasing style, supported the club home and away in his youth. The supporters trust elects a representative to the board, Huw Cooze, who sits as an equal on all the decisions, including last year's appointment of Michael Laudrup as the manager.

Cardiff have bounced through serial crises throughout the same period, while somehow still getting their new stadium built, partly due to the work of Peter Ridsdale, who was seeking to rehabilitate his reputation after presiding over Leeds' 2002 financial implosion. Cardiff had been taken over by Sam Hammam, who had made around £36million from selling Wimbledon's ground to a supermarket, then the club itself to Norwegian investors.

Hammam initially sought to raise Cardiff from the doldrums by invoking the fire and dragons of Welsh battles against the English, calling on the "Welsh nation" to unite behind him – including fans from Swansea. That was scoffed at not just by Swansea supporters, but also some in Cardiff.

Hammam ran up debts of £24m while Swansea, hugely helped by a new stadium the local council built for them, were passing their way to the Premier League under Roberto Martinez, then Brendan Rodgers.

In 2010, Cardiff got the buyer they had been seeking to scoop up the debts left by Hammam and finance a flight to the Premier League. He is Vincent Tan, a Malaysian businessman with no previous connection to football. His executives have said he did not even know the rules of the game before buying the club. He was attracted essentially by the money to be made from the Premier League's commercial expansion, an impulse shared with just about all the buyers of historic clubs in the last few years.

Tan financed a loss of £12m in his first year and £14m in 2011-12 with loans – amounting to £37m – on which he charges seven per cent interest a year.

Arguing that red would be a better colour to achieve that than blue, in 2012 Tan changed the colour of the kit. At the time a club spokesman said: "The changes to the home kit and badge introduced as a consequence of the investment package are designed to help the club to develop its brand and to allow it to expand its appeal to as wide an audience as possible, with a view to delivering local success via an international and diverse market."

Cardiff fans who have lived with that Faustian deal – money, and then promotion under manager Malky Mackay, for the colour and badge of your allegiance – were assailed again in October with a new Tan revelation. Iain Moody, who had moved with Mackay from Watford to be head of recruitment, was removed and replaced with Alisher Apsalyamov, a 23-year-old Kazakh friend of Tan's son, who had some work experience at the club in the summer, and more recently described himself as executive assistant to the recently-appointed chief executive, Simon Lim.

> At Cardiff, the appearance is of an owner who can do what he likes because he bought the club

At Cardiff, the appearance is of an owner who can do what he likes because he bought the club. At Swansea, even in the Premier League where dividends have been paid to those original shareholders, the club is run by people who grew up as supporters, and includes the mutual stake held by the supporters trust, a beacon to others.

Richard Scudamore, the Premier League chief executive, praised Swansea's as "probably the ideal model" a while ago. Yet it is sobering to reflect that in this league, the Cardiff model of ownership is far more prevalent than the Swansea ideal. WS

"In the dressing room there's only discord since we lost Soldado, Costa and Albelda. We've now a lot of boot-lickers who don't speak man to man"

Valencia's French centre-back Adil Rami earns himself a suspension for venting his spleen to Spanish radio

REPORTS we couldn't make up

In the pink...Veracruz and Pumas in Mexican league action

1 Referee Duarte Gomes is used to getting verbal abuse on the pitch from the teams he officiates, but he wasn't expecting it while out shopping.

When the Portuguese official gave up his place in a checkout queue to a pregnant woman, she turned on him and accused him of cheating the club she supported.

"While queuing at a kiosk to buy a newspaper I saw a pregnant lady behind me, a very expectant one, waiting in line," Gomes posted on Facebook. "I tried to be a good Samaritan and do the good deed of the day," he continued. "Please go first, I said."

The woman in question then thanked him and Gomes replied: "You're welcome. Maximum priority to those who need it." To which she replied: "What I really need is for him [the expectant child] to be born, grow up quickly and kick your backside so hard that you stop ripping off my club."

Gomes, who has refereed Champions League games and World Cup qualifiers, ended his post by saying: "I confess I did not anticipate such a fountain of extreme emotion."

Shopping abuse...Portuguese referee Gomes

2 Pink footballs were used in the Mexican league during the month of October as part of a breast cancer awareness campaign. The pink balls were used in a total of 36 matches throughout the month.

Other breast cancer projects in the Mexican league included referees wearing pink kit and clubs being issued with pink training bibs.

Santos Laguna and Pumas also issued a special edition pink shirt as part of the campaign.

3 Former Manchester United and France star Fabien Barthez has swapped his goalkeeping gloves for a pair of driving ones and, alongside co-driver Morgan Moullin-Traffort, claimed the 2013 French GT series.

Barthez and his co-driver finished in fifth and sixth position in the final races of the series at the Paul Ricard circuit near Marseille. And they overcame quality competition throughout the season in the shape of ex-Formula One world champion Jacques Villeneuve and fellow F1 driver Olivier Panis, as well as nine-time world rally champion Sebastian Loeb.

Barthez and Moullin-Traffort won the series with 174 points, 21 more than their nearest rivals, and had two race wins and four podium finishes throughout the campaign.

4 Uruguayan goalkeeper Juan Obelar has been forced to retire after losing four fingers in a freak DIY accident at home.

Former Penarol player Obelar was left with only a thumb remaining on his left hand after accidentally putting the rest of it through a wood plane.

Driving duo...Barthez (left) and Moullin-Traffort

"I was doing a few things for my house, putting wood through a plane and the next thing I know the machine ripped off four fingers," he said.

"I was on my own, I didn't have help from anyone and the only digit I had left was my thumb."

The 34-year-old will undergo reconstructive surgery but has been told there is no chance of saving any of the fingers.

DIY numbers...Santa Fe

"They have already told me I am not going to recover a single finger but they will try to rebuild me a bit," he said.

After leaving Penarol in 2005, Obelar played in Honduras and Colombia before returning to Uruguay. His last club was Fenix, in Montevideo.

5 Colombian side Independiente Santa Fe were forced to purchase counterfeit shirts from street vendors outside the ground prior to their game at Boyaca Chico after they forgot to take their away kit.

Boyaca refused to switch colours, so Santa Fe began the game in their grey training tops, adding numbers with surgical tape. Meanwhile, an assistant went outside to buy the fake shirts from a street trader and then scrawled on the team's names and numbers with a red marker pen.

Santa Fe went on to win the game 2-0.

OBITUARIES

World Cup keeper...Ben Kassou

ALLAL BEN KASSOU (1941–2013)
Former goalkeeper who won 116 caps for Morocco and played at both the 1964 Tokyo Olympics and the 1970 World Cup finals in Mexico.

KERYN JORDAN (1975–2013)
All-time top scorer in the New Zealand top flight, netting 62 goals until he was overtaken by Waitakere United's Allan Pearce last season. Jordan was capped twice by South Africa and played in two Club World Cups for Auckland City. The striker passed away in his hometown of Pretoria after a 12-year battle with cancer.

Sharp shooter...Jordan

Senegal coach...Metsu

BRUNO METSU (1954–2013)
French coach who took Senegal to the Final of the African Nations Cup in 2002 and the quarter-finals of the World Cup that summer [see *Great Teams*, page 106]. He led United Arab Emirates outfit Al Ain to the AFC Champions League title the following year and later had spells in charge of the United Arab Emirates and Qatar national sides. While working in the Middle East he converted to Islam and changed his name to Abdullah Metsu.

STUART WILLIAMS (1930–2013)
Former Wrexham, West Bromwich Albion and Southampton full-back who captained Wales in 14 of his 43 international appearances. He played in all of his country's games at the 1958 World Cup finals in Sweden, where Wales reached the quarter-finals before losing to Brazil.

Paul GARDNER

THE WORLDWIDE VIEW

Referees are failing us all when they fail to punish tactical fouls

There are a couple of commandments in the FIFA rule book that are so frequently ignored by referees that you wonder why they're included in the book at all.

Both require that the referee issues a yellow card; no ifs or buts, an automatic yellow. A player who commits the offence of "dissent by word or action" must be cautioned. Strictly applied, that would mean, by my calculation, 22 players cautioned per game, probably before half-time, never mind the ensuing reds. So, instead, the referees use their judgment and card only the most flagrant offenders. A solution that does little for the integrity of the rules, but seems to work.

Much more troublesome is the wording to be found in the Interpretations section of the 2013-14 FIFA rule book, on page 123. Under Cautions for unsporting behaviour, there appears a page-long list of examples (there are 13 of them) of "circumstances when a player must be cautioned for unsporting behaviour".

Number two on the list reads: "...commits a foul for the tactical purpose of interfering with or breaking up a promising attack."

The infamous tactical foul. The majority of these occur when a team, having been under pressure, is suddenly breaking upfield, possibly outnumbering its opponents. So a timely foul puts a stop to that and allows the offending team to regroup – all at the cost of a yellow card.

But that is not what usually happens, because the yellow is so frequently not given. So much for that "must" written into the rules. Why exactly would referees ignore the rule?

Well, they can argue that they did not consider the foul to be tactical, or that they did not think the attack was particularly promising anyway. Both arguments are difficult to counter.

The second point is made more difficult when the foul is committed deep in enemy territory – such as the counter-attacking team is breaking out of its own penalty area. I mean, how promising can an attack be when it is some 60 yards away from the opposing penalty area?

But, of course, one knows. Fouling in such situations never leaves much doubt that it is tactical. And, of course, the player committing the foul is well aware that the earlier he fouls, the less likely he is to be cautioned. But the yellow cards rarely appear anyway – even when the fouls occur much further upfield.

> In reality, the rather unsavoury truth is that the tactical foul is more praised than damned... commentators, prefer to call it "a smart foul"

In reality, the rather unsavoury truth is that the tactical foul is more praised than damned. When a referee does give a yellow card, the foul is rarely condemned by the TV commentators, who prefer to call it "a smart foul", or to transform the perpetrator into a martyr who has "taken one for the team".

In these situations, it seems that gaining an advantage by deliberately breaking the rules is *de rigeur*.

The threat posed to the game by this game-killing form of cheating was officially recognised by FIFA in 2007, when the clause quoted above was introduced into the rules. Sadly, the attempt to banish the practice with a rule change has not worked. Partly because tactical fouling is still regarded by many as an acceptable, even necessary, part of the game, but mostly because referees have failed to enforce the rule with sufficient vigour. WS

"I'm the bad cop and he's the bad, bad cop"

New Republic of Ireland boss Martin O'Neill (left) explains his relationship with assistant Roy Keane

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

IN

Poland post...Nawalka

EUROPE

Former Under-21s boss **NIKO KOVAC** signed a three-year deal to take charge of Croatia's senior side after Igor Stimac was dismissed.

Gornik Zabrze coach **ADAM NAWALKA**, who played at the 1978 World Cup for Poland, was named boss of the national side following the sacking of Waldemar Fornalik.

Former Holland coach **DICK ADVOCAAT** is in charge of Eredivisie side AZ until the end of the season. He took over from **GERTJAN VERBEEK**, who later replaced Michael Wiesinger at Bundesliga strugglers Nuremberg.

LUIGI DE CANIO replaced Rolando Maran as coach of Serie A strugglers Catania.

England striker **CARLTON COLE**, who had been without a club since leaving West Ham United at the end of last season when his contract expired, rejoined the Premier League side on a three-month deal.

USA central defender **OGUCHI ONYEWU**, who was released by Sporting Lisbon at the end of last season, joined English Championship club Queens Park Rangers.

Anzhi capture...Razak

Sion appointed their eighth coach since the start of last season, replacing Michel Decastel with **LAURENT ROUSSEY** of Lausanne-Sport – who were the only club below them in the Swiss Super League. Former Monaco coach **MARCO SIMONE**, who won four Serie A titles as a striker with Milan, joined Lausanne-Sport as technical director.

Belgian **ARIEL JACOBS** replaced Daniel Sanchez as coach of Valenciennes, who were bottom of Ligue 1.

Ivory Coast midfielder **ABDUL RAZAK** made his loan move from Manchester City to Russian club Anzhi permanent.

HENRIQUE CALISTO took charge of Pacos de Ferreira for a fourth time after coach Costinha was sacked with the club bottom of the Portuguese league.

BJARNI GUDJONSSON, who captained KR to the Icelandic Premier League title, retired from playing to take over as coach of Icelandic Cup winners Fram.

Former Manchester City and Bulgaria winger **MARTIN PETROV** joined CSKA Sofia on a deal until the end of the season. **ANTONI ZDRAVKOV** succeeded Slavisa Jokanovic as coach of Levski Sofia after fans protested at the original appointment of Ivaylo Petev.

GIORGOS DONIS replaced Paulo Sergio as coach of last year's Cypriot champions APOEL.

BATE coach **VIKTOR GONCHARENKO** left the Belarusian club to replace Dorinel Munteanu at Kuban Krasnodar. The Romanian was dismissed after just two and a half months in charge of the Russian side.

SOUTH AMERICA

REINALDO MERLO, the last man to lead Racing to the Argentinian title, in 2001, became the club's third coach of the season, replacing Carlos Ischia.

Mexico helmsman...Herrera

CONCACAF

Club America coach **MIGUEL HERRERA** was placed in charge of Mexico's national team. The 45-year-old replaced Victor Manuel Vucetich, who lasted just two games.

MLS side Chicago Fire appointed **FRANK YALLOP** as coach following the sacking of Frank Klopas, while **GREGG BERHALTER** took charge of Columbus Crew.

Chicago move...Yallop

AFRICA

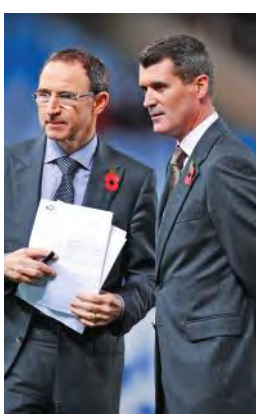
New coaching appointments in the South African top flight saw **ERNST MIDDENDORP** installed at Bloemfontein Celtic, **MARK HARRISON** take charge of

O'Neill and Keane double up for the Republic of Ireland

Former Celtic, Aston Villa and Sunderland boss **MARTIN O'NEILL** is the new manager of the Republic of Ireland, with **ROY KEANE** as his assistant.

Northern Irishman O'Neill, who left Sunderland earlier this year, succeeds Giovanni Trapattoni, who stepped down after Ireland's failure to qualify for the World Cup.

Keane, who had been working as a pundit for ITV, won 67 caps for Ireland but walked out of a training camp ahead of the 2002 World Cup, citing a lack of professionalism among the hierarchy.



Team...O'Neill (left) and Keane

"I hope to one day catch up with him"

France and Manchester United full-back Patrice Evra promises a showdown with hard-hitting TV pundit Pierre Menes (right)

Appointments, sackings and loans

Golden Arrows, **CLINTON LARSEN** join Maritzburg United and **BOEBIE SOLOMONS** move to Polokwane City.

ASIA

ANGE POSTECOGLOU will become the first Australian-born coach to lead the country at a World Cup finals after he was named as Holger Osieck's successor. His role in charge of Melbourne Victory was filled by **KEVIN MUSCAT**.

Brazil bound...Postecoglou

Former Blackburn Rovers manager **STEVE KEAN** was appointed coach of DPMM who, although they are based in Brunei, compete in the Singaporean S.League.

Ex-France defender **WILLIAM GALLAS**, who was released by Tottenham Hotspur at the end of last season, joined Australian A-League side Perth Glory.

Alex Ferguson's former assistant at Manchester United, **RENE MEULENSTEEN** was appointed technical director of the Qatar Football Association.

EUROPE

Failure to reach the World Cup finals saw Hungary's **SANDOR EGERVARI** and **VARDAN MINASYAN** of Armenia resign.

San Marino coach **GIAMPAOLO MAZZA** stepped down, having collected just one point in 76 competitive games during his 15 years in charge.

FABRIZIO RAVANELLI, who was only appointed at the start of the season, was sacked as coach of Ajaccio after a 3-1 home defeat by Valenciennes – their fourth successive loss in Ligue 1 – left the side second from bottom with just one win from 12 matches.

Ajaccio axe...Ravanelli

IAN HOLLOWAY, who led Crystal Palace to the Premier League via last season's play-offs, left his role as manager "by mutual consent" after the team lost seven of their opening eight league games.

Dinamo Zagreb dismissed coach **BRANKO IVANKOVIC** after they lost 1-0 at RNK Split in the Croatian top flight.

Hibernian manager **PAT FENLON** left the club after their 1-0 home defeat by Edinburgh rivals Hearts in the quarter-finals of the Scottish League Cup.

SOUTH AMERICA

SERGIO MARKARIAN stepped down after three years as coach of Peru.

Former Argentina captain **DANIEL PASSARELLA** confirmed he will not be seeking a second term as president of River Plate.

CONCACAF

Montreal Impact centre-back **ALESSANDRO NESTA**, capped 78 times by Italy and a World Cup winner in 2006, has retired at the age of 37. San Jose Earthquakes full-back **RAMIRO CORRALES**, who is the last remaining player from the MLS' inaugural 1996 season, also retired.

MLS coach of the year in 2010, **SCHELLAS HYNDMAN** left Dallas at the end of the season. Vancouver Whitecaps sacked **MARTIN RENNIE**.

Farewell...Nesta

AFRICA

Tunisia's Esperance parted company with coach **MAHER KANZARI** after their CAF Champions League semi-final loss to South African side Orlando Pirates.

Uruguayan **GUSTAVO FERRIN** quit as Angola coach after a string of disappointing results.

ASIA

Australia's **MARK SCHWARZER** has retired from international football. The 41-year-old Chelsea goalkeeper, who is the country's most-capped player having made 109 appearances since his debut in 1993, will now miss the summer's World Cup finals.

OUT

Exit...Kanzari

Hitzfeld to step down

OTTMAR HITZFELD will retire from coaching after leading Switzerland at next year's World Cup finals in Brazil.

"It was the toughest decision of my career," said the 64-year-old German, who won the Champions League with Borussia Dortmund (1997) and Bayern Munich (2001), and is one of only four coaches to lift the trophy with two different teams – along with Ernst Happel, Jose Mourinho and Jupp Heynckes.

World Cup swansong...Hitzfeld

Brian GLANVILLE

THE VOICE OF FOOTBALL

Ferguson's new book is damned by omissions

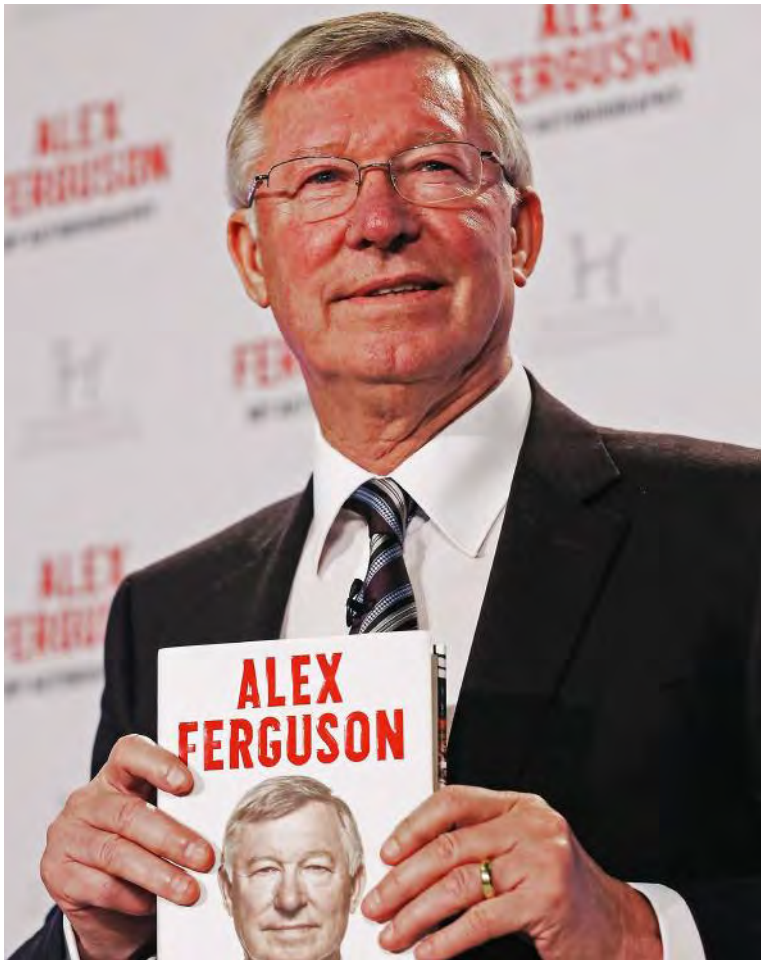
As one would expect, the second volume of Alex Ferguson's autobiography is selling briskly despite its very mixed reception. The question is, though, was he wise to publish it?

Much of it is choleric, thin-skinned, ill-natured and gratuitous. Generosity is at a premium, unless you are Paul Scholes. Some of it is contradictory, and curiously forgetful. Thus, he writes off Steven Gerrard as not being "a top, top player" where, just a few years ago, he was calling him exactly that.

As for Roy Keane, Ferguson is right when he speaks of the player's alarming rages. But what did he have to say either here or in his previous, more balanced, ghosted tome, about Keane's horrific "revenge" – virtually celebrated in his own memoir – on Alf-Inge Haaland?

Ferguson scornfully dismissed the possibility, allegedly twice extended, of managing the England team. But for all his undoubted and unmatched success with Manchester United, what happened when he managed Scotland in the 1986 World Cup in Mexico? Failure at the first hurdle for a team which might have done so much better had Kenny Dalglish, then in magisterial form, been fit to play.

There were those, though Dalglish himself has denied it, who believed that he withdrew because Ferguson had omitted his Liverpool team-mate Alan Hansen from the squad.



More questions than answers...Ferguson brings out the second volume of his autobiography

> "In my opinion, he doesn't know the meaning of the word [loyalty]"
>
> Roy Keane on Alex Ferguson

Ferguson's signing... copies are made ready at a book launch in Manchester

Little is said about the unappealing Rock of Gibraltar racehorse episode, allegedly through legal restraint. But it hardly showed Ferguson in a positive light, as he, having been generously granted the prize money won by the horse, demanded a share of breeding fees from its formidable Irish owners, John Magnier and JP McManus, into the bargain. He was refused and initially threatened legal action but, discretion perhaps being the better part of valour, Ferguson eventually stood back. Which prevented the Irish millionaires from publishing a list of 99 questions for the United board.

You wonder if these included the bizarre episode of American goalkeeper Tim Howard and the obscure Italo-Swiss agent who, as revealed in a Sunday newspaper, was paid a lot of money for supposedly engineering the work permit needed by Howard to play in the Premier League.

The paper disclosed that most of this money was passed on to Mike Morris, an English agent in Monaco, thence finding its way to the Elite agency run by Ferguson's son, Jason.

As it happens, I was myself a member of the small committee organised by the Department of Employment to consider these appeals. We met regularly at a Mayfair hotel to vote on each case. Though I wasn't on the committee in that particular instance, I knew full well that no agent ever came near us. Besides, after Howard's splendid goalkeeping in the Confederations Cup in France the previous summer, the success of his appeal was certain.

As for Jason Ferguson and Elite,

Unacceptable...Spartak Moscow fans light flares and display a swastika at a game against Shinnik Yaroslavl

we know that Ferguson went into a seven-year sulk with the BBC over an investigative programme about Elite made not even by the sports department but by Panorama. By the same token, Ferguson intransigently refused over the years to give the supposedly mandatory post match press conference. The Premier League lacked the guts to bring him to heel.

Surprisingly, he has warm words for the Glazers, so hated by United fans for piling colossal debt on the club they took over. And he seems well disposed to Alistair Campbell, of the dodgy dossier.

Ferguson's domestic record is phenomenal, but neither of his two European victories has been truly outstanding. Well might he have exclaimed, "Football, bloody hell!" after the last-ditch victory over a Bayern Munich team which had been largely superior against a United unbalanced through starting Ryan Giggs out on the right wing. The match was then saved breathlessly by the substitutes Teddy Sheringham and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer. In Moscow, victory was snatched when Chelsea's John Terry slipped and missed in the penalty shoot-out.

Yet any manager who can perform such minor miracles at Aberdeen, as Ferguson did before he ever joined United, must be seen as remarkable. Their European Cup-winners Cup conquest of Real Madrid in the Final was indeed the stuff of legends.

Racism is Russia's incurable disease

The vile abuse of Manchester City's Yaya Toure was, alas, no more than par for the Russian course. UEFA's response was all too feebly predictable.

The merest slap on the wrist and the enforced closure of just one section of the stadium, holding a mere 3,000 fans, for the match against Bayern Munich was a limp-wristed decision, justifiably condemned by Stan Collymore and other black stars, past and present.

Who could disagree with Collymore's insistence that the stadium should have been closed for the rest of the tournament and a large fine imposed? How could that self-important, ineffectual body Kick It Out applaud the decision, calling it "swift, decisive and proportionate"? Proportionate to what?

The fact is that Russian football is rife with racism and instances of it are manifold, from Lokomotiv Moscow to Zenit. That the 2018 World Cup should ever have been awarded to Russia by hypocritical FIFA, with its lily-livered approach to racism, was in its way as great a scandal as giving the 2022 tournament to Qatar.

Last summer, UEFA introduced new regulations on racism. Dire consequences would follow a second racist offence, still more dire ones a third. Far too little, far too late. The Russian disease is incurable.

Platini is no better choice than Blatter

On reflection, would you rather be shot or hanged? Would you, that is to say, prefer Sepp Blatter or Michael Platini as president of FIFA?

The German journalist who once told me many years ago that "Sepp Blatter has 50 new ideas every day and 51 of them are bad" could well have been talking of Platini. While nothing better could have been expected of Blatter – the protege of the appalling Joao Havelange – Platini, given his superb playing record, might at first have seemed a breath of fresh air.

How deluded we were. Platini it was who fatuously enlarged the secondary European competition, dragging in a phalanx of remote, obscure countries. He has now compounded this by wrecking the European Championship, not only bloating the size of the final tournament in Havelange-Blatter style but, having failed to stage the tournament in Turkey, who proved to be available, deciding to spread it mindlessly across a host of different countries.

Moreover, Platini it was, doubtless with the best of good intentions – the path to hell, you may remember, being paved with them – backed Qatar's World Cup bid from the first, then cheerfully, if idiotically, declaring his support for it to be staged in the European winter. This, from the president of the European body.

His latest inanity is to propose increasing the complement of the World Cup finals, already vastly overloaded, first by Havelange and then by Blatter – none other than a new Robin Hood, if you remember his recent fatuities at the Oxford Union – to 40 teams.

One deluded columnist thinks "it makes sense," on the grounds that more African and Asian teams should be admitted. Yet the invention of jet travel has long ago made the present pattern of the tournament obsolescent.

Surely the logical answer would be to "de-regionalise" the qualifying stages, not least by finding a formula to enable European and African teams directly to compete. Bloating the World Cup finals still more would distort the already top-heavy tournament beyond all logic. **WS**

● Read Brian Glanville's exclusive online column at worldsoccer.com

Contentious...Platini wants more countries to contest the World Cup finals

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Lovell soccer

Money worries...Brazil may be home to some of football's most fanatical fans but there are concerns about the spiralling cost of the 2014 World Cup

Don't forget the football...

The draw for next summer's World Cup is set to be overshadowed by concerns over transport, security and political protests. Tim Vickery, in Rio de Janeiro, sets the scene

All the fuss about the use of FIFA rankings in the World Cup draw may turn out to be something of a red herring. The top teams in the rankings will be seeded, leading to the strange state of affairs where Switzerland will be in the top pot but not Italy. However, in the 2014 World Cup, a team's ranking within its group and who they are drawn to play may not be as important as before; instead, location and kick-off times may prove far more significant.

For example, the seeded team in Group H (H1) will feel that it has been greatly favoured as its matches are in Belo Horizonte, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo – three well-connected cities all in the south-east region with games likely to be played in mild temperatures.

The team drawn as G1 will also have done well in terms of travelling, as all its matches are in the north-east. But with 1pm kick-offs in Salvador and Recife either side of a 4pm start in Fortaleza, the players will have to be prepared for extreme heat. And then, should they win the group, they need to get ready for a thermic shock as the first knockout game is down south in Porto Alegre, where winter can bite hard.

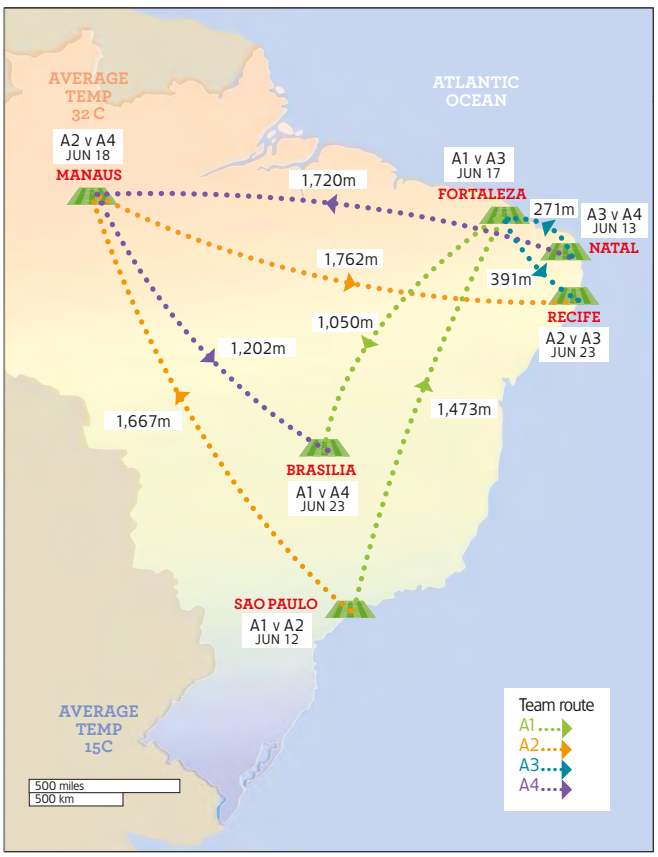
> "If the sky is the limit for prices, then we are going to hell"
> Flavio Dino, president of the state tourism agency

Some sides will be forced to undertake epic journeys. Brazil's first opponents (A2) will open the competition in Sao Paulo, then make the huge trek to Manaus in the Amazon before returning part of the way to close their group campaign in Recife. In a country the size of a continent, logistical planning will be an essential component of victory.

The original thinking was that this World Cup would return to the system

Itinerary: where and when the 32 finalists will play their group games – and how far they will have to travel

Group A



Group B

used in competitions of old, where the country would be divided into regions, where teams would be based for all of their group matches. But such common sense made no political sense.

As the bill for staging the tournament kept rising, the idea of one region monopolising all of Brazil's matches became politically unfeasible. If the whole country was paying for it, the whole country wanted a chance to see its own team. And so the hosts are travelling around: Sao Paulo in the south-east, Fortaleza up in the north-east and Brasilia in the centre.

And if Brazil are criss-crossing the country, then so is everyone else. As we have seen, though, the luck of the draw will mean that some are doing it more than others, and also facing variable climatic conditions.

The fans will also be expected to clock up the air miles – an area of organisation which has long been seen as the Achilles' heel of the whole 2014 project. Will Brazil's airport capacity be able to cope? Some of the airports have been hurriedly offered as concessions to private companies in order to speed up reforms, but work on seven airports is running behind schedule, with a government minister blaming "bad engineers" – and the engineers blaming governmental incompetence.

Any strain on the airports will be greatly reduced if no one can afford the plane fares. And this has become a justified fear, with prices for important dates during the World Cup showing increases in some cases of over 1,000 per cent. A ticket between Rio and Sao Paulo on the opening day of the tournament currently costs almost as much as a flight from Rio to New York.

"We have the worst of all possible worlds in Brazil," says Flavio Dino, president of Embratur, the state tourism agency, "a monopolised market with no restrictions on prices. If the sky is the limit for prices, then we are going to hell.

"The air companies have to explore the opportunities of tourism, not exploit the tourist. But their current vision is excessively short term and opportunist."

Paying the price

Dino's fears are certainly pertinent. One of the central justifications for the amount of public spending on the 2014 World Cup – and almost the only possible justification for the inclusion of Cuiaba and Manaus among the host cities – is the potential long-term boost to local tourism. If the foreign or domestic tourist is priced out of attending the World Cup, or if they return home with the feeling of having been ripped off, then a spectacular own goal will have been scored.

Sky-high...rocketing air fares in Brazil are a cause for concern

Once the draw for the tournament has taken place then a new plan will be constructed of air routes during the World Cup, in the hope that an extra supply of planes on important routes will lead to a market solution to the price problem. Fares should come down if there is more supply to match the demand, but should this not happen then negotiations are likely to take place, with the government dangling the threat of opening up the internal flight market to foreign companies.

Internal flights, of course, are a public concession, giving the government a leverage it does not possess in trying to combat abusive hotel prices, for example. A successful conclusion to this process – enough flights at a reasonable cost – is vital to the fate of the tournament. Whatever the outcome, this is likely to be a very expensive World Cup for the visiting fan.

And an expensive one, too, for the local taxpayer. Commenting in early November on public spending on the World Cup, great player turned combative, plain-speaking politician Romario said: "It is now 5billion Brazilian Reais (£1.36 billion) more than when the first budget was drawn up. And what is worse is that many projects of urban mobility, which would have been an

Group C

Group D

excellent legacy for society, have been withdrawn and are unlikely to see the light of day."

Popular dissent

Polls reveal that the Brazilian population is generally in favour of staging the World Cup, but that does not mean that there is approval for the way that it is being staged. Significant elements of Brazilian society have come to the conclusion that they are paying too much for the tournament and not getting back enough in return.

This was clear from the protest movement which initially flared up in June in Sao Paulo over the issue of public transport – the very issue that the World Cup has done so little to improve. The protests caught on nationally, at the very time that the Confederations Cup was taking place, and increasingly state spending on football tournaments formed part of the front line. "FIFA standard" became one of the slogans of the protestors as people wanted public services to be as impressive as the gleaming new stadiums which had been expensively built for the occasion.

It was apparent back in October 2007, when Brazil was named as 2014 host, that the competition would not fulfil its social potential. Brazil had known for

Controversial...the Arena da Amazonia in Manaus, which is a city that doesn't boast a top-flight club

Group E

Group F

four-and-a-half years that it would be awarded the tournament. But the discipline of competition was not present – 2014 had been declared South America's turn, and there were no credible alternative candidates – thus allowing complacency to set in. Brazil had not even chosen its host cities by October 2007.

Factor in the customary Brazilian bureaucracy and this delay had two obvious consequences: the cost of what had to be done went up, and the scope of what could be done went down. What was less obvious, though, was the angry way that so many Brazilians would react to this state of affairs. No one, not even the original organisers, foresaw the June and July protests catching on with such scale and ferocity.

It is impossible to predict the precise political environment in which the World Cup will be played – the likelihood is, though, that there will be mass demonstrations near World Cup venues. The protest movement is now part of Brazil's DNA; a new generation has flexed its political muscles and sensed its own power. Moreover, there is more to protest about.

While six host cities were used in the Confederations Cup, the World Cup will use 12, including the controversial choices of Manaus and Cuiaba – which are near tourist destinations (the Amazon rainforest and the Pantanal swamp respectively) but lack football teams with the mass following to make the new stadium viable.

FIFA secretary-general Jerome Valcke made a recent inspection visit to Cuiaba – but before he arrived protestors had entered the stadium and daubed slogans on the stands.

Balancing act

The late cancellation of the Soccerex conference, scheduled for Rio de Janeiro in the last week of November, is clearly significant. This was to have been the last of four annual conferences held in the city, but the political context has changed substantially over the past 12 months. The Rio state government ended its sponsorship of the event, citing financial considerations.

The obvious conclusion is that they are running scared of public opinion, and that the long-term problems of opening themselves up to a legal challenge for having broken a contract are outweighed by the short-term advantage of not being seen to be funding a football related event.

The probability is that the Brazilian authorities will be caught in an awkward situation during the World Cup. With the global gaze upon them, they will have to preserve the right of people to protest peacefully, while also trying to ensure that any demonstrations do not interfere with the smooth running of the tournament. And this balancing act will stretch the resources available to deal with the country's problem of urban crime – another aspect which could

> "Many projects of urban mobility, which would have been an excellent legacy for society, have been withdrawn"
> Footballer turned politician Romario

Unhappy...Brazil's growing protest movement

Group G

Group H

generate plenty of negative publicity if some travelling supporters are on the wrong end of unpleasant experiences.

There is plenty at stake, then, at different levels. Domestically, 2014 is election year in Brazil, with president Dilma Rousseff almost certainly seeking a second term three months after the tournament. And the public relations problems in Brazil – which until a few months ago were seen all around the planet as a land where football was more important than life itself – will surely have implications on the way that future World Cups are managed.

In a private capacity, for example, Valcke commented recently that it might be a good idea to make approval in a popular referendum a condition for bids to stage the tournament. Certainly Brazil 2014 would have benefited from a proper debate on World Cup aims and obligations.

It is clear that there are some important balls in the air over the next few months – more significant than those that get pulled out by the celebrities on December 6 when the 2014 World Cup draw takes place. **WS**

Political backing...Brazilian president Dilma Rousseff shows off the Confederations Cup during a meeting with the national squad

THE DRAW: DECEMBER 6

The draw for the 2014 World Cup finals will be held at the Costa do Sauipe Resort in Mata de Sao Joao, Bahia, on December 6. The 32 teams will be divided into four pots. Pot 1 will contain the hosts, Brazil, and the seven highest-ranked qualifiers according to FIFA's October 2013 ratings. Pots 2, 3 and 4 will be split by geographic criteria. As there will be 13 European representatives, a maximum of two will be permitted in each of the eight groups of four.

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Neymar has a starring role as Barcelona triumph in the first *Clasico* of the season.

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Owner's daughter Barbara Berlusconi looks set to become increasingly important at Milan.

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A great start to the season sees several of Southampton's side called into the England squad.

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Dutch financial support sees the Pacific Islanders spend 11 weeks on tour in Europe.

SID LOWE
in Madrid

First blood to Neymar

Barcelona win the opening *Clasico* of a new era

There was a quarter of an hour to go in the first *Clasico* of the season when Gerardo Martino took off Neymar. As the Brazilian headed towards the touchline, the Camp Nou stood to applaud. Neymar raised his hand to acknowledge the ovation and the few Barcelona fans who were not already standing got to their feet. The noise was deafening. "I'm so happy," he beamed afterwards.

For the first time in a decade, Real Madrid and Barca both went into the season with new coaches: Jose Mourinho and Tito Vilanova having departed a year after Pep Guardiola had done the same. If it felt like a new era at the beginning of the game, that sensation was deepened by the end of it.

After six successive visits to the Camp Nou in which he had scored, Cristiano Ronaldo finally failed to find the net. Lionel Messi did not score either, and he missed the opportunity to overtake Alfredo Di Stefano and become the top scorer in the history of Madrid versus Barcelona.

This time the men who have come to define the rivalry in recent years did not decide the game. In their place stood Neymar. Messi and Ronaldo will be back – they are too good not to be – but this was the Brazilian's moment.

"Neymar really is worth €100million," one columnist insisted. Barcelona had beaten Madrid for the first time in six games, the balance tipping back their way after a period in which Mourinho's Real appeared to have found a way to defeat their greatest rivals.

The *Clasico* is a game that is always rich in storylines and subplots; this time it was presented as a head to head between the two big summer signings: Neymar, who joined Barcelona for €58m from Santos, despite Real Madrid's attempts to gazump them, and the world's most expensive player, Gareth Bale, who cost €100m.

Both men had been quick to insist that they were joining clubs where the world's best already played. Neymar repeated over and over that Messi is the planet's finest footballer, insisting that he had come to assist him, not to outshine him. Meanwhile, Bale called Ronaldo "the boss" and when asked if he would be taking free kicks, smiled: "I'll have to ask Ronaldo that."

Stuttering start

Neymar came into the game with a significant advantage. He had joined Barca almost two months before Bale signed for Madrid. The lack of a proper pre-season had meant a stuttering start to Bale's Madrid career, marked by minor injuries. The *Clasico* was only his second start and he was withdrawn on the hour. Neymar had hit the ground running and he it was who emerged the winner. He scored the opener, the ball somehow slipping through two pairs of legs to complete an unintentional double nutmeg, then provided the pass for the second in a 2-1 victory.

Neymar's pass in the 78th minute reached Alexis Sanchez, who had come off the bench in place of Cesc Fabregas. The Chilean ran through, chased by Raphael Varane, checked back and clipped a lovely 20-yard chip over Diego Lopez, who had advanced from his line. Chips are called "vaselines" in Spanish and one Catalan newspaper could not resist the double entendre. Barcelona had stuck it up Madrid and their cover ran simply: "With Vaseline."

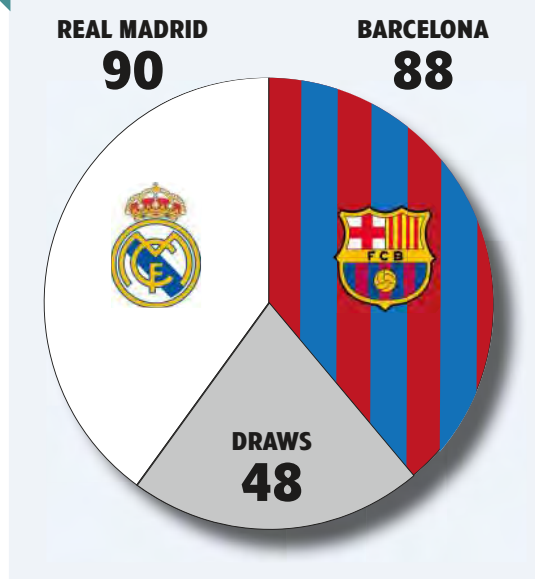
Sanchez was also greeted with an ovation when he headed back into the dressing room after the game. His time at Barcelona has not been always easy and criticism has rarely been far away. When he described himself in one interview as a "*jugadorazo*" (a great player), most people considered it funny. If that implied supreme self-confidence, the reality was different as he is a player whom staff have had to work hard to convince that he is good enough.

Now he got to the dressing room and his team-mates cheered: "*Jugadorazo*". So, the following morning, did the newspaper *Sport*.

On the other side of the divide, they were talking about the referee Undiano Mallenco, who had turned down three penalty shouts: one for Barcelona and two for Madrid, including a push on Ronaldo by Javier Mascherano. They were also talking about the formation employed by Carlo Ancelotti. He began with Sergio Ramos in central midfield, a position he had not occupied in eight years, and no centre-forward: Ronaldo,

Passion of the *Clasico*...Neymar is mobbed by team-mates after giving Barcelona the lead

CLASICO: HEAD TO HEAD



> "Scoring a goal in a *Clasico* is very special, it's a match that everyone wants to play"
>
> Neymar

Angel Di Maria and Bale were up front, with the Welshman in the central role. Karim Benzema, Jese and Alvaro Morata were on the bench. So too was Isco.

At one point in the first half, cameras caught Madrid' centre-back Pepe yelling at Ramos to swap. "Better you here and me there," he said. Ancelotti explained afterwards that, with Asier Illarramendi not fully fit, he had little other choice. But the experiment didn't really work.

Up front, Bale was not entirely comfortable with a striker's role. Madrid were struggling and Barcelona appeared to be in control. When, in the second half, Illarramendi and Benzema came on, Madrid's shape looked more natural and their performance improved.

Benzema hit the bar and Victor Valdes saved from Ronaldo and Sami Khedira. Madrid had more of the ball and began to create a handful of chances, and Jese scored in the dying seconds.

Defensive change

There were positive signs for Madrid, even though they had lost. "We're closer to seeing the team I want to see," said Ancelotti the following day. Barcelona had been worried. Martino replaced Andres Iniesta with Alex Song. "Was that a defensive change?" he was asked. "Yes," he replied, "and I would do it again."

That exchange encapsulated the debate that has brewed around the new Barcelona coach.

It was not just Ancelotti under fire. Barcelona looked less like Barcelona; there was less control, less fluidity – they had been startlingly inaccurate in their passing in the second half – and Messi appeared slightly out of sorts, shifted across to the right, a position he had left behind. Martino had sought to wrest control back again.

It worked too. Six *Clasicos* on, Barcelona had a victory. After 10 League games they had nine wins and a draw.

"We're six points clear; we could have been level," said Martino.

For the 48th week in a row, Barca were top of the table. The first *Clasico* of a new era was theirs. It was Neymar's. This is not the end, but it was a start. **WS**

PADDY AGNEW
in Rome

Roma falter as Milan unravel

Unbeaten start to season ends for league leaders

It had to happen. Roma's fantastic seasonal start finally came to a relative halt in Turin in early November. Just three days after Roma had set a new record with 10 successive opening Serie A wins, thanks to a 1-0 home win over Chievo, the league leaders came unstuck in a 1-1 away draw with Torino.

It was Dutch midfielder Kevin Strootman – one of the big success stories of Roma's season so far – who put his side in front after half an hour. But the visitors then eased off a little, and Torino's Italy international and former Roma player Alessio Cerci scored a deserved equaliser.

Clearly, this is not the end for Roma, who were without talisman Francesco Totti and Ivory Coast striker Gervinho. However, it's becoming apparent that they do not have the squad strength to go all the way this year. In a three-way title contest with Juventus and Napoli, Roma can at least console themselves with the advantage of having no midweek European ties.

Family business...Barbara Berlusconi with her younger brother, Luigi

Roma held...Maicon in action against Torino

> "After such an extraordinary run it can happen that you have a little slip-up"
> Roma midfielder Daniele De Rossi on the end of the unbeaten run

Milan problems

One side that almost certainly will not feature in the title contest is Milan, who are currently in the bottom half of the table and not looking good. Their poor league form has been reproduced in their Champions League campaign this autumn, where they recorded just one win (a not very convincing 2-0 at home to Celtic), two draws and one loss in their opening four games.

Worse still, against perhaps one of the least impressive Barcelona sides of recent years, Milan looked way out of their depth in a 3-1 defeat at Camp Nou. All of which may yet prompt some serious changes at the club with the enactment of "Plan BB".

BB in this case is 29-year-old Barbara Berlusconi, the daughter of club owner Silvio Berlusconi. For the last two years she has had an ill-defined role at the club, sometimes called "Delegate For Special Projects". Thus far, her most significant contribution to club affairs, publicly at least, has been a much publicised affair with the club's Brazilian star Alexandre Pato, who is now with Corinthians in Brazil.

It has always been suspected that, sooner or later, Ms Berlusconi will want to move into the driving seat at Milan – and that time seems to have arrived.

On the day after Milan lost 2-0 at home to Fiorentina, in early November, she publicly called for a change of "club philosophy". Most saw those remarks as an attack on managing director Adriano Galliano, a trusted advisor to Silvio Berlusconi for the last 35 years and the man who has run the club for much of that time.

Within days, Galliano had dropped in on his boss at his San Martino villa in Arcore, near Milan. When he emerged from a three-hour meeting, his words and his expression suggested that, his old friend had decided to drop him in favour of his daughter.

Media speculation suggests Galliano will have gone by next season and Ms Berlusconi will be running the club with a new management team that may yet include former Milan greats such as Paolo Maldini and Filippo Inzaghi. **WS**

GAVIN HAMILTON
in London

Saints point the way forward

Southampton's progress is a boost for local English talent

Nothing underlines the unpredictably of this season's Premier League more than the progress of high-flying Southampton, who went into November's international break in the Champions League places, ahead of Chelsea and both Manchester clubs.

Eighteen months ago, Southampton were in League One, having been relegated from the Championship in 2009 following a 10-point penalty for going into administration.

Their rise, funded by the late Swiss billionaire Markus Liebherr and overseen by his associate, Swiss-Italian banker Nicola Cortese, has been spectacular and culminated in England call-ups for Adam Lallana and Jay Rodriguez.

"They have been the team, I think, that has taken the league by storm," said England manager Roy Hodgson, who also gave a debut to the club's striker Ricky Lambert in August. "No one mentioned them among the top five or six clubs at the start of the season, so congratulations to them."

Lallana and Lambert were in the side that won back-to-back promotions under manager Nigel Adkins.

In their first campaign back in the Premier League, the squad was augmented by young talent such as Rodriguez and full-back Nathaniel Clyne, combined with eye-catching overseas purchases such as Gaston Ramirez.

They made a slow start, but the sacking of Adkins in January 2013 was surprising given he had steered the club three points clear of the relegation zone.

His replacement by former Argentina international Mauricio Pochettino was greeted with scepticism, but a series of impressive results took Southampton to the relative safety of 14th place.

This summer, the spine of the team was reinforced with some serious spending on midfielder Victor Wanyama (Celtic, £14million), defender Dejan Lovren (Lyon, £8.5m) and striker Dani Osvaldo (Roma, £15m). Pochettino has encouraged a high-pressing game that has proved hugely successful. So far the highlights have been a 1-0 win at Liverpool and a 1-1 draw at Old Trafford, where Manchester United were lucky to escape with a point.

Cortese has been a controversial figure. He banned photographers from the stadium at one point, insisting the media buy photos from an official club source. But he has a long-term strategy in place and has committed the club to fielding local youngsters. James Ward-Prowse and Luke Shaw are the latest graduates from an academy that has produced Theo Walcott and Gareth Bale.

Millions are being spent on upgrading the club's Staplewood training ground under the supervision of head of development Les Reed.

"The academy is very important to become a sustainable business," says Cortese. "We would want to see a starting XI in the Premier League that is fed from our youth development.

"We have got examples. The Champions League title of Barcelona in 2009. At the beginning of the game they had seven players from their academy. At the end of the game they had eight.

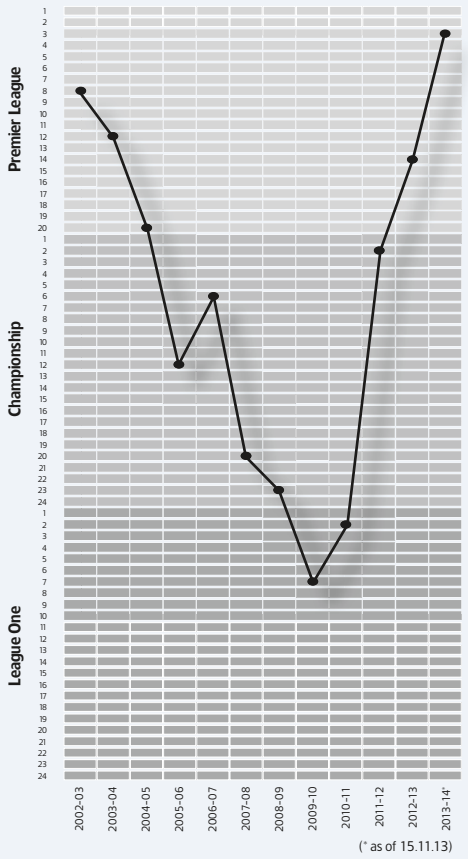
"It's hard to quantify, but we definitely believe we can achieve that as well."

A grandiose statement, but Southampton's league position bodes well for such ambition. WS

> "Southampton, at the moment, are becoming a very good club as far as England are concerned in terms of providing players"
> England manager Roy Hodgson

Centre of attention...Lallana (second right) earned a call-up for England's November friendlies

SOUTHAMPTON'S FALL AND RISE



ICELAND

JAMES MONTAGUE

Minnows hope to make history

National team are two games away from being the smallest ever World Cup finalists

The big man with a beard and horned helmet, wearing nothing but a Superman onesie and wrapped in an Icelandic flag against the biting cold outside Oslo's Ullevaal stadium, was crying like a baby. It is a few moments after Norway and Iceland had played out a 1-1 draw in their final 2014 World Cup Group E qualifier.

For the Norwegians there had been nothing to play for after a disappointing campaign in which they had started as the group's top seeds and ended up sacking their coach Egil Olsen with two matches to go. But for Iceland an improbable prize was in sight. Having finished second, they had clinched a play-off place and the chance to qualify for Brazil.

For the man in the Superman onesie, it was all a little too much.

"We're two games from the World Cup," he shouted, heaving breaths through streams of thick tears which splattered in my face. "How do you think I feel? I'm from little Iceland! Do you hear my voice? I'd give it all for this country. I'm so fucking proud. We can stand tall! Against whoever!"

He was one of the 1,000 Iceland fans in the Ullevaal to watch history be made. Or at least watch the foundations of history being built. Despite being drawn from pot four – alongside the likes of San Marino and Andorra – and only having a population of 360,000, Iceland could become the smallest nation to ever qualify for a World Cup.

Take a moment to consider that number. A population of 360,000 is the same size as Coventry, with virtually no diaspora to call upon in the traditional way that smaller teams such as Cape Verde Islands and Palestine try to level the playing field.

In England the debate about young talent and how it is nurtured in a Premier League that has a heavy foreign influence continues to rumble on. But those arguments seem meaningless when held up against Iceland. Despite its tiny population, it has assembled a squad who are playing in some of Europe's top leagues. There's Tottenham Hotspur's Gylfi Sigurdsson, of course, but also Ajax's Kolbeinn Sigthorsson and Alfred Finnbogason of Heerenveen, who have been scoring goals in the Dutch league. Iceland have even had a player pinched off them. AZ striker Aron Johannsson recently decided to represent the USA, the country where he was born, rather than Iceland – where he was brought up by two Icelandic parents – after they capped him at under-21 level.

It was a hugely controversial issue in Iceland, but the team thrived anyhow.

Rapid improvement

"I think everybody felt we had a chance when we saw the draw," said Kolbeinn Tumi Dadason, who is an Icelandic football journalist. "We have a generation of players who made it for the first time to the Under-21 Euro Championship and this is that generation of players."

But what's the reason for Iceland's rapid improvement? According to their Swedish coach Lars Lagerback – who has been to three World Cup finals with

Thank you...Iceland celebrate as news comes through of Switzerland's victory

WORLD CUP PLAY-OFFS: EUROPE

Portugal	v	Sweden
Ukraine	v	France
Greece	v	Romania
Iceland	v	Croatia

(first leg Nov 15, second leg Nov 19)

Sweden and Nigeria – it is down to facilities and playing all year around.

"I like the country and the society as a whole," explains Lagerback in the team's hotel in Oslo the day before the Norway game. "In Iceland they have a winter season indoor and a summer season outdoor. They have a longer competitive season than Sweden. Training and playing the whole year is the main reason they are doing so well."

Virtually all the players have come through Iceland's league system and now play in foreign leagues. It's a remarkable achievement. But the big surprise has been the continued form of Eidur Gudjohnsen. One of Iceland's best results was a 4-4 draw against Switzerland, after being 4-1 down at half time. Lagerback brought on Gudjohnsen and it changed the game.

"This is the first time in the history of Iceland that we don't just have three or four players but a whole squad," adds the coach. "It's amazing to see the quality footballers we have now."

There is still a little pessimism at home though. "We don't want to get our hopes too high," admits Dadason.

> "We have three or four players who are world class. Before we had just one [former Chelsea and Barcelona striker Eidur Gudjohnsen]"
>
> Icelandic journalist Kolbeinn Tumi Dadason

"They call it Eurovision fever. Every time we send a song to the Eurovision, we believe that it will win it and usually finish 16th. So we shouldn't take anything for granted."

The Norway-Iceland match was played in a half-empty Ullevaal stadium. With Norway out, all the noise came from the visiting supporters, with some 0.28 per cent of Iceland's population having travelled.

Although in second place, Iceland knew that if Slovenia beat Switzerland they had to win. Iceland went 1-0 up thanks to Sigthorsson, who scored his 13th goal in 19 games. Norway equalized and the game finished 1-1, leaving Iceland to wait nervously for the Slovenia result. And then the news came through that Switzerland had won, and the players sprinted towards the crowd, reducing the man in the Superman onesie to a wreck.

Now only Croatia stand between Iceland and the World Cup – and Lagerback and his fourth finals.

"Every time you go to the finals you are happy," admits the 65-year-old coach. "But the special thing with this would be taking a team that really nobody believed could do it." **WS**

JOEL RICHARDS
in Buenos Aires

The problem with Arsenal

The team with close links to the FA president claim another trophy

"For the good of Argentinian football, I'm going to ask the referee to try to let San Lorenzo win." So said Julito Grondona, son of the Argentinian FA's president, Julio, on the eve of the domestic Cup Final between Arsenal – the club which has close links to the Grondona family – and San Lorenzo.

His comment was a jab at the Sarandi-based side's critics. There are plenty of them about, but the principle target was the showman Marcelo Tinelli, who swapped hosting the country's lascivious take on *Strictly Come Dancing* to become vice-president of San Lorenzo two years ago. Tinelli, like many, was unhappy with the refereeing decisions that had seen Arsenal progress past All Boys in the semi-finals.

Ultimately, the referee would have little to do with Arsenal lifting the trophy for the first time. Their 3-0 victory owed far more to San Lorenzo's poor defending and Ignacio Piatti's crude lunge which saw his side reduced to 10 men for half the game.

Nicolas Aguirre, Mariano Echeverria and Emilio Zelaya were the goalscorers on the night, but the cup winners' real hero is Gustavo Alfaro.

The club's most successful coach of all time, having led Arsenal to four of their five pieces of silverware, plays the modest card regularly, and to great effect. He rightly pointed out that San Lorenzo boasted a far superior set of players ahead of the Final, and yet masterminded an excellent win for his team. When he won the clausura title in 2012 he did so with a team that were the lowest-scoring champions ever.

This latest triumph came in a tournament that is still finding its feet. For the sake of opening up to the rest of the country, neutral venues are used in the Argentinian Cup. But these venues, including the Estadio Bicentenario Ciudad de Catamarca where the Final was staged, are over 700 miles away from Buenos Aires, which is where most clubs are based.

Cup triumph...Arsenal celebrate in Catamarca

> Victory in the Argentinian cup gave Arsenal their third domestic trophy in two years and ensured their place in next year's Libertadores Cup

The Cup was recently reinstalled – after 1969 and 1970 editions – to respond to complaints that the decision makers and clubs in the capital dominate the Argentinian game. The fact that the side to win it this year should be Grondona's team is a wry twist.

Defying the doubters

There are negative murmurings whenever Arsenal win. It doesn't really matter whether it's a throw-in, a free-kick or a game – let alone an entire competition – Arsenal are on a hiding to nothing. Founded by the Grondonas, and starting out in the lower leagues, Arsenal won promotion to the top flight in 2002 despite a tiny support. Now they rub shoulders with the likes of neighbours Racing and Independiente; two teams so esteemed by the club's founders that Arsenal's colours are the sky blue and red of Avellaneda's "big two".

Now, however, it is Arsenal who are casting a shadow over two neighbours who between them have won four world titles and eight Libertadores trophies.

Racing took 13 matches to win their first game of this season and were bottom of the table at the start of November, with boardroom disputes seeing off sports director Roberto Ayala and coach Luis Zubeldia. Independiente, meanwhile, are making hard work of mounting a promotion bid from the second division.

After Independiente went down last term, it left Boca Juniors as the only team never to be relegated. Historians pointed out that in fact there is another side never to have been relegated, but being a younger club with not so many years in the Primera Division it doesn't quite have the same weight. That club is, of course, Sarandi's Arsenal. WS

Inspiration...coach Alfaro has been the mastermind behind Arsenal's recent success

KEIR RADNEDGE
in Abu Dhabi

Over age and under scrutiny

Cheating is an age-old problem at international youth tournaments

Win...Nigeria celebrate scoring in the their 4-1 victory over Iran in the last 16 of the Under-17 World Cup

As long as youth tournaments exist the issue of overage players will not go away and the problem reared up again after barely a week of the Under-17 World Cup finals in the UAE.

The hosts' coach, Rashed Al Badwawi, embarked on a long rant after two opening defeats had knocked his side out in front of their own fans.

"I am sure 70 per cent of the players participating in this World Cup are not of the appropriate age," said Al Badwawi. "They are over age as it appears from their size and the way they play. I'm not accusing specific players, but I can say some haven't the right to be here."

He also said the UAE would formally complain to FIFA and name those players about which his staff had doubts. In the end, however, no complaint was submitted and Al Badwawi subsequently apologised. But it was too late – the damage had been done.

Young players' ages are checked by magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans on the wrist bones. This is considered capable of producing a 99 per cent success rate in assessing precise age and spares teenagers being subjected to unnecessary X-ray radiation. FIFA introduced MRI scans at the 2009 Under-17 World Cup in Nigeria after concerns that up to 35 per cent of players in previous tournaments had infringed the regulations.

Competition rules demand four players be chosen at random for MRI tests once the teams have arrived in the host country. Those testing between levels one to five of the scan can play. None of the random 96 failed their test in the UAE – but the issue had erupted already in South America and Africa.

Venezuela took it upon themselves not to run any risks and Andres Ponce, their seven-goal top scorer in the South American qualifying championship, was left at home after local media queried his age and family background. Nigeria dropped 11 of their pre-selected squad of 30 after winning the African Under-17 title. All failed wrist scans.

At least it seems that Nigeria's eventual squad did boast true under-17 players. Youth academy advances in the country mean that, for the first time, ages of players such as the outstanding Kelechi Iheanacho can be checked from earlier stages of their competitive careers.

The basic problem, as FIFA medical officer Yacine Zerguini noted, is that the birthdate documentation standard in north America and Europe does not exist in many other regions. Age certainty is therefore impossible.

> "I have been in this job for 30 years and my experience tells me that the players of Nigeria were not teenagers"
>
> Iran coach Ali Doustimehr

Sceptics' corner

Iran coach Ali Doustimehr placed himself squarely in the sceptics' corner after his team were beaten 4-1 by Nigeria in the second round. "I have been in this job for 30 years and my experience tells me that the players of Nigeria were not teenagers," he said.

"I don't want to raise the issue that they are over age. Football is what happens on the pitch. I have to say they played very well for their age.

"If they are under-17 it means they are very strong and Nigeria will have a very good national team in the future."

Apart from MRI scans, the only certain way to nail down a player's age is through an expanding network of youth tournaments. Once a player is registered for the first time his birthdate sticks.

So, should all players be subjected to a wrist scan by FIFA? Zerguini does not think so, stating: "In that case, with all the dope tests as well, we would risk turning this into a medical event rather than a football tournament." WS

UNDER-17 WORLD CUP 2013: FUTURE STARS IN ABU DHABI

Sixten Mohlin
(Malmo & Sweden)
Solid keeper whose safe handling breathed confidence into the rest of the team after a hesitant start.

Special skills...Nathan (left)

Nathan
(Atletico Paranaense & Brazil)
Boyish-looking no10 whose craft and skill linked play superbly.

Kelechi Iheanacho
(Taye Academy & Nigeria)
A maker and taker of goals. His quarter-final strike against Uruguay was typical of his class.

Ivan Ochoa
(Pachuca & Mexico)
Attacking midfielder who is deceptively awkward-looking until he finds space out wide and makes the ball do all the work.

Deceptive...Ochoa

Leandro Otormin
(Nacional & Uruguay)
Brave, hard-working and neat on the ball, he has a sharp eye for an opening, and is quick and direct to take advantage.

BELGIUM

JOHN CHAPMAN
in Brussels

Youth will have its day

As the national team soars, league clubs are investing in the future

Belgium have risen to fifth place in the FIFA rankings, their highest place ever. And although questions can be asked about the validity of those rankings, it is an undisputed fact that national coach Marc Wilmots has a talented squad at his disposal; one which is packed with players who are performing regularly in some of Europe's biggest leagues.

This is in sharp contrast with the country's top flight – the Belgian Pro League – which is at one of its lowest ebbs in terms of the number of players possessing that essential mix of quality and experience.

The performances of Belgian clubs in Europe have confirmed this. Of the four teams involved in this season's Champions League and Europa League – Anderlecht, Standard Liege, Genk and Zulte Waregem – only Genk recorded a victory in their combined first 12 games of the group stage. What's the reason? Well, as the saying goes, "money doesn't talk, it screams".

These days Belgian clubs play in front of small crowds and their budgets are minuscule compared to many European countries. But this wasn't always the case. In 1978, Club Brugge reached the Final of the European Cup, where they lost to Liverpool, and in the same year Anderlecht won the Cup-winners Cup. Even smaller teams used to be big in Europe, with Mechelen winning the Cup-winners Cup in 1988 and Royal Antwerp reaching the Final in 1993.

However, this decline in the fortunes of Belgian club sides might just have a silver lining as they are investing in youth in an unprecedented way.

Anderlecht have the youngest squad in this season's Champions League, while Club Brugge, Genk and Standard Liege have all fielded teams in the domestic league that are sprinkled with teenagers.

Neerpede academy

In the mid 1990s, Anderlecht decided to invest heavily in new facilities. Club directors visited academies in England, Italy, France and Holland before finalising the design of the Neerpede academy, which was officially opened in 2011. The £10million complex houses training pitches, fitness rooms, a swimming pool and all the things necessary to produce the next Romelu Lukaku or Vincent Kompany.

In February of this year, the club won the prestigious Viareggio tournament with a team that included seven long-term members of its academy. It was only the second time in 33 years that the trophy had been won by a team from outside Italy. Two months later, Nabil Jaadi was voted the player of the tournament as they won the Aegon Future Cup in Amsterdam. Finally, in September, midfielder Youri Tielemans became the third-youngest player to appear in the Champions League, aged 16 years 148 days.

Before Neerpede's opening, Standard Liege had inaugurated their own impressive Robert-Louis Dreyfus academy. This advanced facility contains grass and synthetic pitches, a hotel, medical centre, restaurant and gyms, and recent graduates to Standard's current first-team squad include Michy Batshuayi, Dino Arslanagic and Ibrahima Cisse.

Over at Club Brugge, Bjorn Engels and Brandon Mechele have been regular partners in the centre of defence, while Lukaku's cousin, Boli Bolingoli-Mbombo, is waiting in the wings.

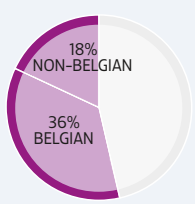
At Genk, Anthony Limbombe and Jordy Croux are both getting games and 17-year-old striker Siebe Schrijvers, who is very highly thought of, recently scored his first league goal.

Priced out

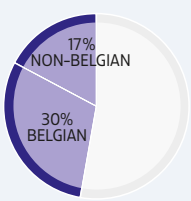
For many years, Belgian clubs have been priced out of buying players ready for first-team football, with Anderlecht's €5m purchase of Partizan Belgrade's Aleksandar Mitrovic being the exception (see *6 of the best*, page 62). As a result, they have had to focus on developing their own players and blooding them at an early age.

There is also a significant number of young players emerging from a mixed-ethnic background – a phenomenon that has happened later in Belgium than in many countries. For example, the

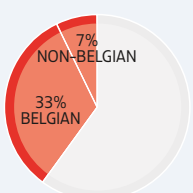
PERCENTAGE OF UNDER-21s IN THE SQUADS OF BELGIUM'S BIGGEST CLUBS



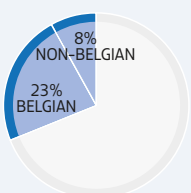
54% of first-team squad



47% of first-team squad



40% of first-team squad



31% of first-team squad

Boys to men...Anderlecht teenager Tielemans holds off Ezequiel Lavezzi of Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League

> "Clubs have chosen to invest in youth rather than bring in third-rate players from other countries"
>
> Pro League technical advisor Chris Van Puyvelde

national team's 23-man squad at the 2002 World Cup contained just one player of mixed origins, Mbo Mpenza, while the current side has players with roots in the Congo, Morocco, Mali and Martinique. This is a major change, similar to the one that transformed French football over a decade ago with *Les Bleus*.

But while this emphasis on youth development is all well and good, young players need time to adapt to top-flight football and it is not easy for clubs to find the right balance between youth and experience. And then there is the lurking presence of bigger clubs from the English Premier League.

Jean Kindermans, head of Anderlecht's academy, is on record as saying he deplores the number of scouts attending the club's under-14 games, videoing the players, and talking to parents and players alike. And Kindermans has a right to be concerned about the flow of young talent out of the club: Chelsea signed Belgium Under-17s captain Charley Musonda, Manchester City took centre-back Mathias Bossaerts and, most high profile of all, Manchester United snapped up winger Adnan Januzaj.

Chelsea move... Belgium Under-17s skipper Musonda

Although the advancement of such young talent will continue to benefit the national team in the future – even if Brussels-born Januzaj has yet to commit himself to the *Diables Rouges* – the country's club sides will continue to struggle if foreign clubs cherry-pick their best players before a transfer fee can be asked for. **WS**

TUVALU

STEVE MENARY

Dutch happy to fund massive tour

Financial backing sees the Pacific Islanders spend 11 weeks in Europe

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Tuvalu comprises nine coral atolls and is halfway between Hawaii and Australia. Formerly a British colony known as the Ellice Islands, the Polynesian inhabitants of Tuvalu secured independence in 1978.

Size 26 sq km
Population 10,698
Capital Funafuti
Languages Tuvaluan, English (Kiribati is also spoken on the island of Nui)
Religion Protestant

The day after his side's 0-0 draw with Asser Boys in Assen, Tuvalu captain Etimoni Timuani was summoned home from Holland by his employers via Facebook. That the Tuvalu Provident Fund – the people who pay his wages – let him go at all was amazing as Tuvalu were in Europe for an astonishing 11 weeks.

The mammoth tour was arranged with the help of Paul Driessen, a Dutchman who persuaded a mix of Dutch councils and clubs to support Tuvalu's dream of FIFA membership in return for the tourists going into local schools to talk about climate change.

"We have 2,700 football clubs in the Netherlands," says Driessen, who estimates the tour would have cost €200,000 if organised solely by the cash-strapped Tuvalu National Football Association (TNFA). "I was quite sure some of those clubs were happy to support this training camp. We started conversations with about 20 clubs and they are the ones that funded it."

Neerpede academy

For some players the trip was a first away from home and their only outlay was getting to Europe. To cut costs, they spent three days on a boat to Fiji before flying to Amsterdam via Hong Kong – a trip that took five days in total.

Sapetaoi Nokisi, who lives in New Zealand, is a winger with Ranui Swanson and he interrupted a degree in economics to go on tour. He was joined by another New Zealand-based Tuvaluan, Alopua Petoa, who had previously spent three months in Holland playing for Brabantia before playing semi-professionally with Waitakere City.

Colin Tuaa, Waitakere City's coach and the first islander to play for New Zealand's senior side, says: "The step was quite big but both improved over time. Alopua got a few starts but was mainly a substitute. He came in and out of the first and second team."

Big help...tour organiser Driessen (left) chats with Tuvalu coach Leen Looijen

In Tuvalu, players often need three or four touches to control a ball because the pitches are so poor, but unlike on most Pacific islands, the locals prefer football to rugby. There are two leagues of eight clubs and the national side is surprisingly resilient.

> "It's quite hard being away from home for so long, emotionally to be away from your family"
>
> Tuvalu winger Sapetaoi Nokisi

In 2011, Tuvalu beat Samoa 3-0, American Samoa 4-0 and drew 1-1 with Guam – all three opponents members of FIFA.

At the 2007 Pacific Games, the TNFA was so broke that the national team travelled to Samoa by boat. There was only time for one warm-up game and, dogged by seasickness, they were crushed 16-0 by Fiji. In their next game, they lost just 1-0 to New Caledonia and then drew 1-1 with Tahiti.

An independent nation since 1979, Tuvalu has been trying to join FIFA since 1987, but first it must become a full Oceania Confederation member – and that looks unlikely.

As an OFC spokesman explains: "Although an associate member, Tuvalu does not satisfy minimum requirements for FIFA membership like international stadiums, training grounds, hotels and transportation to host international matches and tournaments. It also needs to improve its football infrastructure to bring it to a required level for FIFA to accept Tuvalu as a fulll member."

How that can ever be achieved without FIFA help is a mystery to everyone in Tuvalu. WS

Photos: Steve Menary

Going Dutch...Tuvalu (in blue) and Asser Boys take to the field for a game in Holland

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PLAYER Biography

Carlos Tevez

Firebrand, malcontent, spoiled brat? All Juventus know is they have a talented player who has never forgotten his roots. By Paddy Agnew

Committed...Tevez in action for Juventus against Catania in Serie A

When Carlos Tevez scored his sixth Serie A goal of the season for Juventus, against Catania at the end of October, the Argentinian immediately signalled to the closest ball boy. "Carlitos" wanted a ball to stick up his jumper in the gesture made by all footballers whose wives are about to have a baby.

For 29-year-old Tevez and his wife, Vanessa, the baby on the way will be their third, something the player clearly wanted the world to know. The Tevez gesture, however, prompted an amused comment from his club coach, Antonio Conte, who said: "I'm delighted that Carlitos is so prolific on...and off the field. Long may he continue like this."

Conte then made a rather telling observation, saying: "Just think; everybody had described him to me as someone very different from the player I have had to deal with.

"He is an exemplary professional who always puts the team first. I couldn't have asked for better."

The point about Tevez, of course, is that when he joined Juventus in the summer for €9million from Manchester City, his reputation came before him. Thanks partly to extensive British tabloid coverage, he was portrayed not so much as the "exemplary professional" as rather a perennial spoilt brat and bad boy.

That was hardly surprising, given that in his Premier League days he was involved in a series of controversies, from his transfer from West Ham United to Manchester United, to his move across Manchester to City, to – last but not least – his misunderstandings with City manager Roberto Mancini and his subsequent "sabbatical" midway through the 2011-12 season.

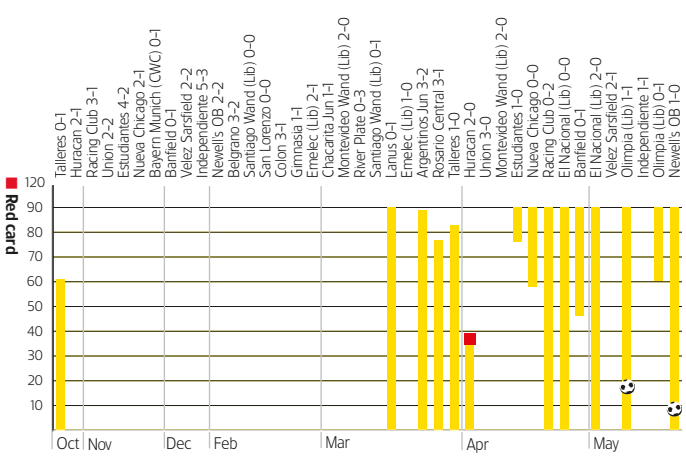
Just about everybody in Italy was ready for fireworks. After all, if there is one club and one coach in Serie A certain to take a hard line with petulant prima donna behaviour, it would be Juventus and Conte.

But as Conte's comment would ▸

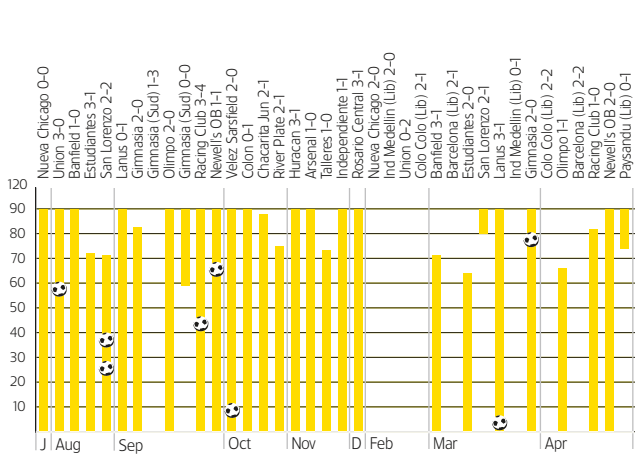
TIMELINE: EVERY MATCH, EVERY MINUTE, EVERY GOAL

- Boca Juniors
- Corinthians
- West Ham
- Manchester Utd
- Manchester City
- Juventus
- Argentina

WCF	World Cup finals
WC	World Cup qualifier
CA	Copa America
CC	Confederations Cup
CWC	Club World Cup
Lib	Libertadores Cup
Sud	Sudamericana Cup
Rec	Recopa Sudamericana
BzC	Brazilian Cup
SPS	Sao Paulo State championship
CL	UEFA Champions League
UC	UEFA Cup/Europa League
USC	UEFA Super Cup
EC	English FA Cup
ELC	English League Cup
ECS	English Community Shield
ISC	Italian Super Cup



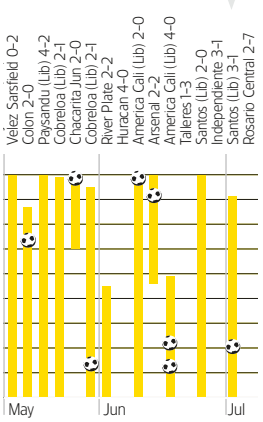
2001-02

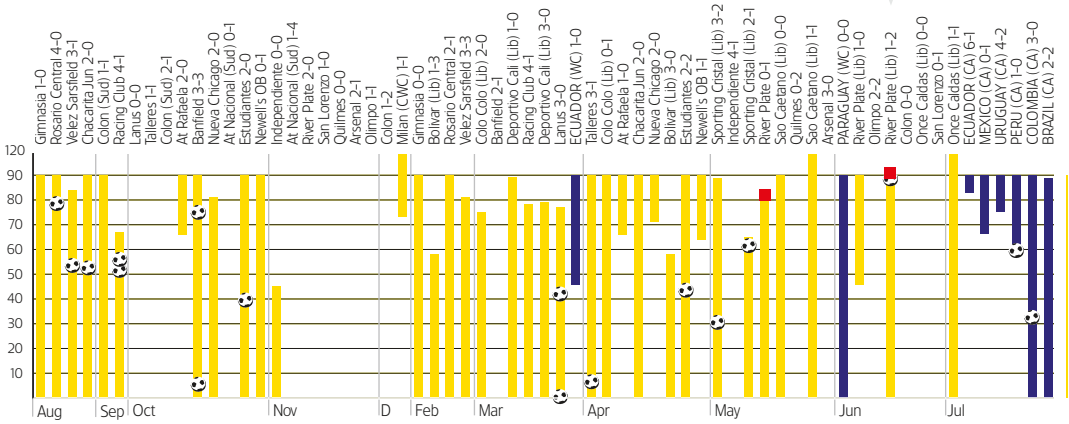


2002-03

July 2, 2003 – lifts the Libertadores Cup after Boca Juniors beat Santos in the Morumbi stadium in Sao Paulo to secure a 5-1 aggregate win.

June 17, 2004 – the celebration of his late goal against River Plate in the Libertadores Cup semi-final cost him a red card and a ban from first leg of the Final.





2003-04

FACT FILE

Carlos Alberto Tevez (born Carlos Alberto Martinez)

Nationality Argentinian

Age 29 (05.02.84)

Place of birth Ciudadela, Buenos Aires Province, Argentina

Height 5ft 8in (1.73m)

Position Forward

Teams
Boca Juniors (2001-04) 110 games/38 goals
Corinthians (2005-06) 76 games/46 goals
West Ham United (2006-07) 29 games/7 goals
Manchester United (2007-09) 99 games/34 goals
Manchester City (2009-13) 148 games/72 goals
Juventus (2013-present) 15 games/7 goals*
Argentina (2004-present) 64 games/13 goals*

Honours
Boca Juniors Intercontinental Cup 2003; Libertadores Cup 2003; Sudamericana Cup 2004; Argentinian Primera 2003 apertura
Corinthians Brazilian Serie A 2005
Manchester United Club World Cup 2008; UEFA Champions League 2008; Premier League 2008, 2009; League Cup 2009; Community Shield 2008
Manchester City Premier League 2012; FA Cup 2011; Community Shield 2012
Juventus Italian Super Cup 2013

(all information and statistics up to and including 02.11.13)*

indicate, so far the relationship has been all sweetness and light. On and off the field, Tevez has made a splendid start, not only scoring in his first three official games for Juventus but also quickly establishing himself as an automatic first choice without whom the team struggles.

As Conte suggests, he has also

> "They described him to me as someone very different to the player I deal with. He is an exemplary professional"
> Juventus coach Antonio Conte

proved a model professional in Turin, not only training diligently but also showing himself to be tactically flexible. A small example of that came when he had no argument after being asked to take up a left-sided attacking role in the prestige Champions League clash away to Real Madrid in October – which Juve lost 2-1 – even if he clearly prefers a much more central attacking role.

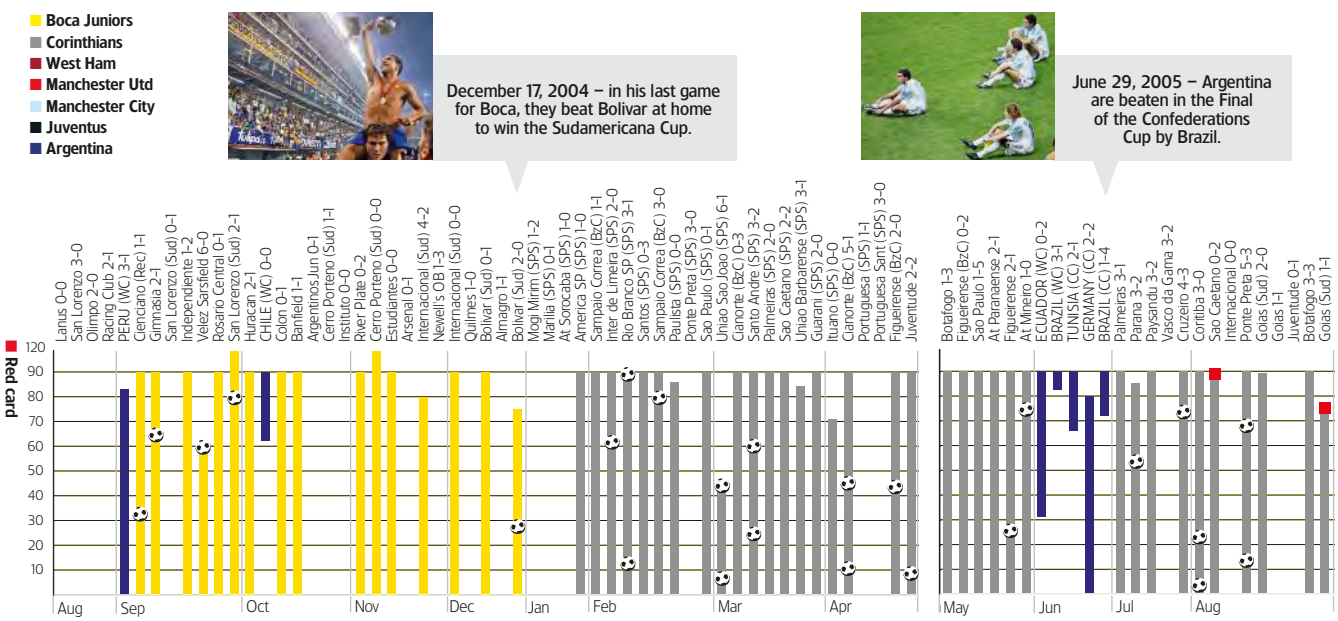
Family man...with wife Vanessa and daughters Katie (left) and Florencia

For one person at least, Tevez's bright start in Italy comes as no surprise. Former Juve great, Czech Republic forward Pavel Nedved, once played alongside Conte, but these days he serves as a club board member and told Turin sports daily *Tuttosport*: "When we bought this guy, we were sure about what we were getting.

"He's a fantastic player, I never had any doubts about that and the results are there for all to see. He's an inspirational player...if you like, he's a bit like a cross between Conte and myself."

Even the fact that he has inherited the no10 shirt previously worn by such luminaries as Alessandro Del Piero and Roberto Baggio has had no negative impact on Tevez's quick adaptation to Italian football. When a Juventus fan review, *HJ Magazine*, recently asked him about that famous shirt, they were probably a little taken aback when he replied: "I don't think about things like

Boca boys...with Juan Roman Riquelme (left)



that...about playing in the no10 shirt. That would be just putting myself under more pressure. I just try to play in the way I played when I was still in my own home town".

A shirt number, however, was never going to worry the boy from the crime-ridden Fuerte Apache barrio in Buenos Aires. He once told *Garganta Poderosa*, a community magazine written by youngsters from the local area: "If it wasn't for football, I'd be dead or in jail." For the accompanying photo shoot, he wore the iconic white headscarf of the human rights campaigners, the Mothers of the Disappeared. It is these displays of solidarity that earned him the title of the "People's Player" in Argentina.

Scars on his neck

Tevez remains distinguishable by the scars on his neck from an accident with boiling water from when he was not yet a toddler, while his teeth owe their less-than-perfect look to his part in a street brawl. Yet legend has it that when he joined Boca Juniors as a 17-year-old in 2001, he declined the club's offer to have work done on his face, saying that his scars were part of "who I am, now and in the past".

To this day, he celebrates goals by lifting his club jersey to reveal a T-shirt bearing the name of deprived areas of Buenos Aires such as Cuidad Oculta, Isla Maciel or Fuerte Apache.

But his commitment does not stop there. As he explained to *HJ Magazine*: "I try to help kids from my quartiere. I pay for a small organisation which tries to help people from my area. We have a canteen which serves breakfast, lunch and dinner to kids in Fuerte Apache.

"I was lucky, I got out, I was lucky to be touched by God and to be able to play football all over the world."

Pride...Tevez pays tribute to Fuerte Apache, the poverty-stricken Buenos Aires district where he was raised

Agent...Joorabchian

As Tevez approaches the end of his career, it may even be that his current stint with Juventus represents his last chance with a top team that has serious Champions League and domestic title ambitions.

Perhaps for that reason, the "Italian" Tevez has looked and sounded like a rejuvenated player since his arrival.

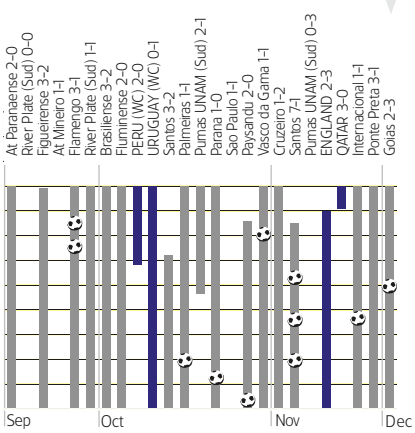
In a long interview with *Tuttosport*, when asked about the impact Juventus has made on his life, Tevez answered: "It has made me want to play again and that's the best thing that can happen to a footballer."

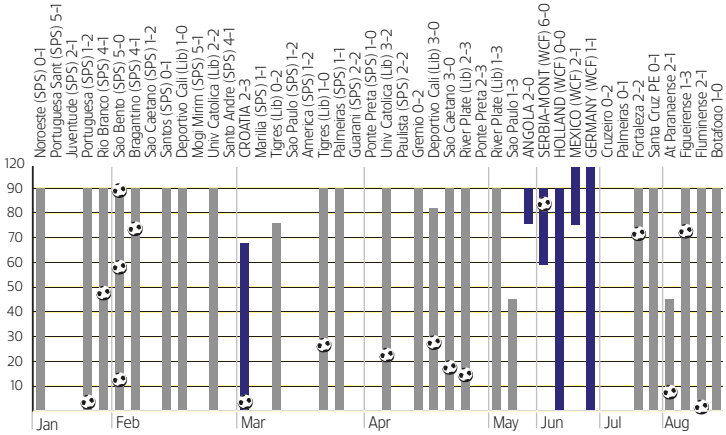
It could be that these are just "diplomatic" words spoken for the benefit of the city's madly pro-Juventus sports daily. It may even be that, within months, Tevez will again be at loggerheads with his club as his agent Kia Joorabchian moves in to strike another big bucks deal. But in the meantime Tevez continues to make the right moves.

When fate placed him face to face with Mancini, who is now in charge of Turkish side Galatasaray, before a Champions League tie in October,

December 4, 2005 – a successful first season at Corinthians of Brazil is rewarded with the league title.

June 16, 2006 – on target for the first time at a World Cup finals when he scores Argentina's fifth goal in the 6-0 win against Serbia-Montenegro.





You can't catch me...Tevez bamboozles Real Madrid during a Champions League clash at the Bernabeu in October

he immediately greeted the former Manchester City boss, saying afterwards: "There is plenty of respect between us. We shook hands and it was good to see him again. All that belongs to the past."

When asked about his current boss Conte, Tevez paid him the highest compliment in his *Tuttosport* interview, commenting: "He's a winner, just like [Alex] Ferguson. He is phenomenal, for him every game is a Cup Final and he wants to win them all.

"Both he and Ferguson consider their club to be the best in the world. People like them are great motivators because they are the first ones to totally believe in what they are doing."

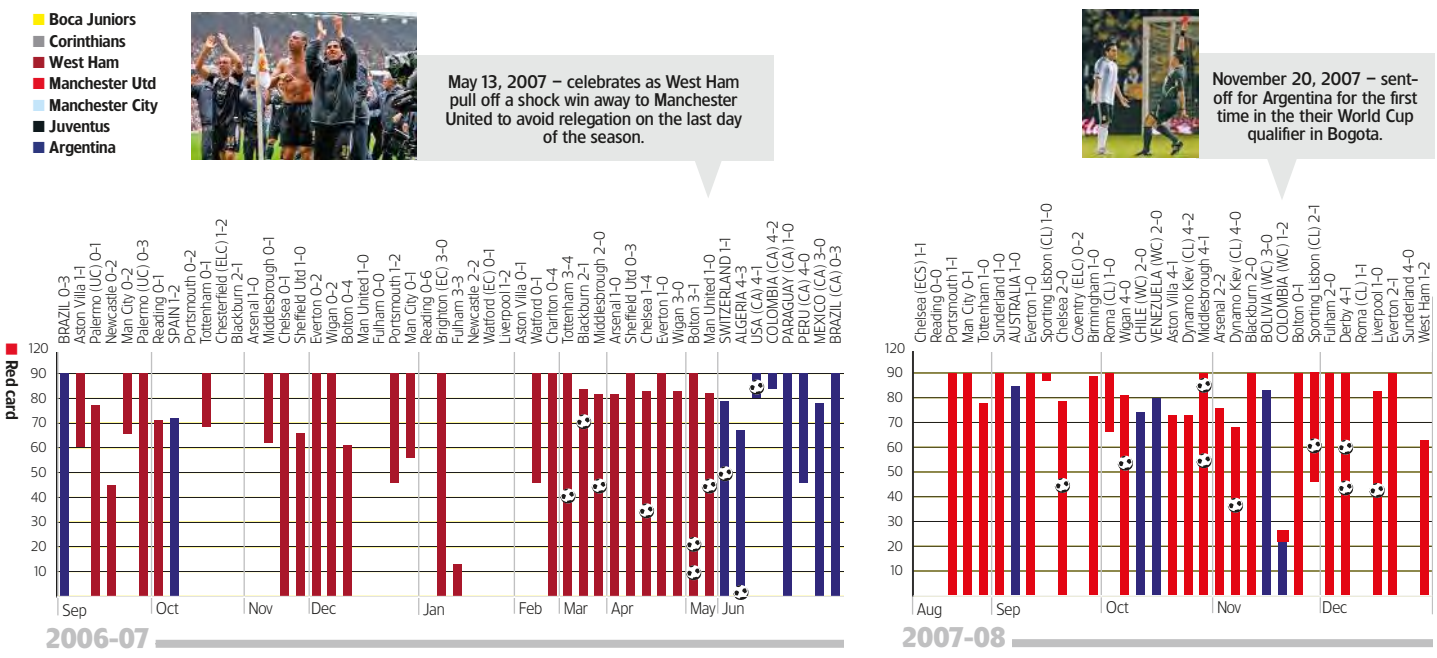
Cultural differences

Tevez also suggests that his relatively quick adaptation to Italian football has been greatly helped by his Argentinian background, saying of the cultural differences between life in Manchester and life in Turin: "The way of life in Italy is much more similar to that in Argentina – the family matters a lot, everybody eats together, people stay together, you can get on easily with people, even if you don't know the language."

Fed up...but Tevez has moved on from his sullen days at Manchester City

If there is currently a fly in the Tevez ointment, it is his relationship with Argentina's national coach Alejandro Sabella, who continues to overlook him. When asked about his chances of getting back into the squad for next summer's World Cup finals in Brazil, Tevez these days usually replies with a "No comment".

In the past, his outspoken nature often landed him in trouble with the Argentinian football authorities. He



was the only player to speak in support of Diego Maradona after the 2010 World Cup debacle and then, after a 4-1 friendly win over Spain under Sergio Batista, he claimed he wasn't sure if he could be bothered to come and play for the national team any more.

Batista only called him up for the Copa America in 2011 under pressure from the fans and media alike. And yet he was the fall guy for failure in that tournament, after missing the crucial penalty against Uruguay in the quarter-finals.

Since replacing Batista, Sabella has played the attacking line-up of Lionel Messi, Sergio Aguero, Gonzalo Higuain and Angel Di Maria – meaning not only is there no room for Tevez in the side, he doesn't even make the squad.

Even if he would like to play at Brazil 2014, Tevez is realistic about his chances and recently told an Argentinian radio station that he does not expect to get a call-up.

As for his compatriot Higuain, who has also made a spectacular start to life in Serie A with Napoli, Tevez says of the former Real Madrid star: "I know him and we get on well. But I wouldn't talk about friendship.

"I don't have any friends in football, only at Fuerte Apache." **WS**

Joy...scoring against Mexico at South Africa 2010

From Club Parque to Boca: where it all started

Boyhood dreams...Tevez at All Boys

The doors of Club Parque are now closed, but back in its heyday visitors to the home of one of Argentina's most famous youth teams would often stop in the hall and admire the creased and faded photos of its many graduates.

The young faces of Fernando Redondo, Juan Roman Riquelme, Esteban Cambiasso and Juan Pablo Sorin all figured prominently. In the cafeteria, Internazionale, Real Madrid, Barcelona, Roma and Argentina shirts were hung up, bearing the names of those players who could proclaim themsleves Club Parque alumni.

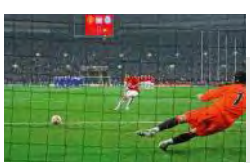
When Fernando Gago signed for Real Madrid, a television crew went to ask the Club Parque coach, Ramon Maddoni, for an opinion on the move. But instead Maddoni ended up talking about his favourite pupil, Carlos Tevez.

"Carlitos was the best player we ever saw at that age," said Maddoni, who explained that he had a four-point plan for talent spotting – which obviously served him well as he is responsible for the development of a large portion of Argentina's top talent in recent years. Technique, an ability to develop the basic skill set, movement and controlled aggression are what Maddoni looks for. According to him, Tevez had everything but it was this controlled aggression – and work rate – which particularly stood out.

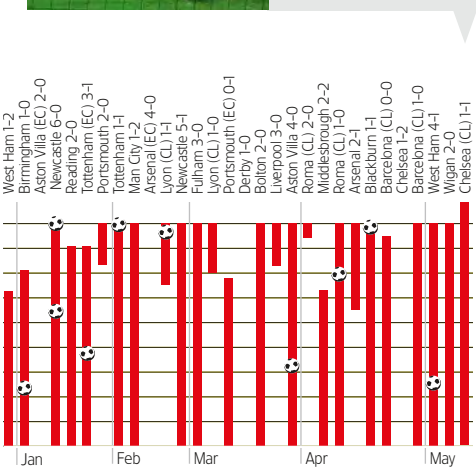
In the 1990s, a deal was struck that saw Maddoni and Club Parque become the feeder club for Boca Juniors' youth system, rather than that of Argentinos Juniors. At the time, a youngster called Carlos Martinez and registered with All Boys was attracting interest from all the top clubs. In order to cut through red tape and ensure that he swapped clubs, the player's surname was changed to his mother's maiden name, and Tevez duly signed for Boca.

At a club that historically demanded players give their all, regardless of ability, he stood out. Combined with his class and skill, Tevez had the perfect combination to win over the Boca fans. So too did the "chicken dance" he performed in front of River Plate supporters in a Libertadores Cup semi-final in 2004. It may have earned him a red card, but it also gave him a place in *superclasico* folklore – the highest pantheon of the Argentinian domestic game.

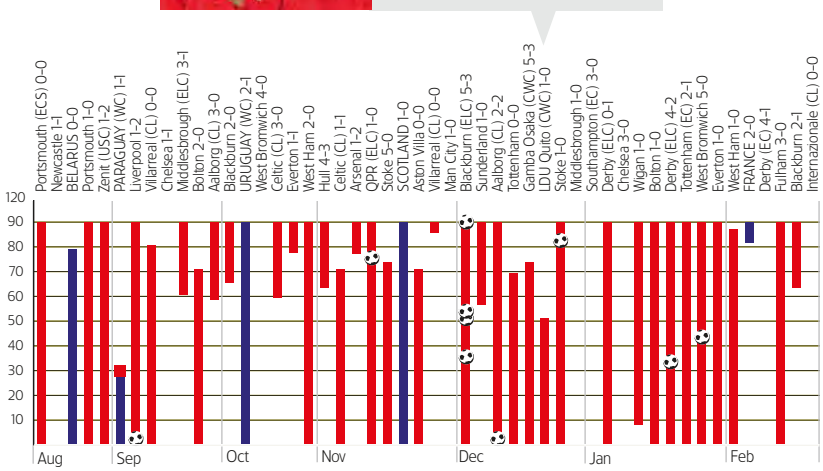
Joel Richards



May 21, 2008 – Manchester United beat Chelsea in the Champions League Final after a penalty shoot-out.

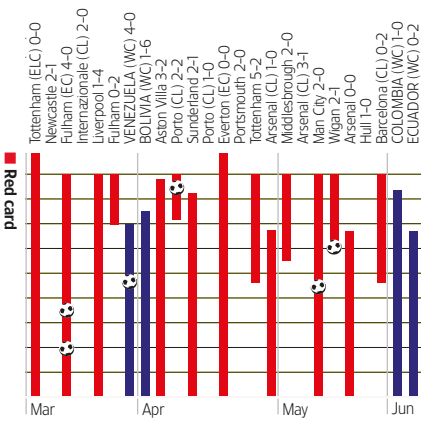


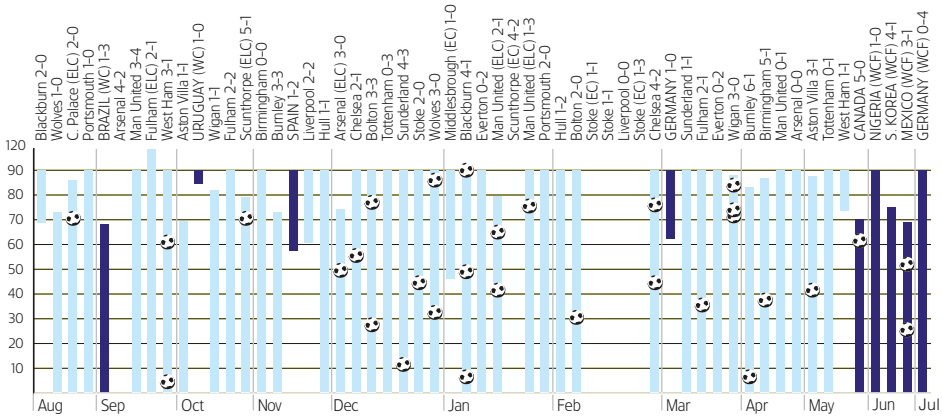
December 21, 2008 – the Club World Cup is won with a victory against LDU Quito of Ecuador in Yokohama, Japan.



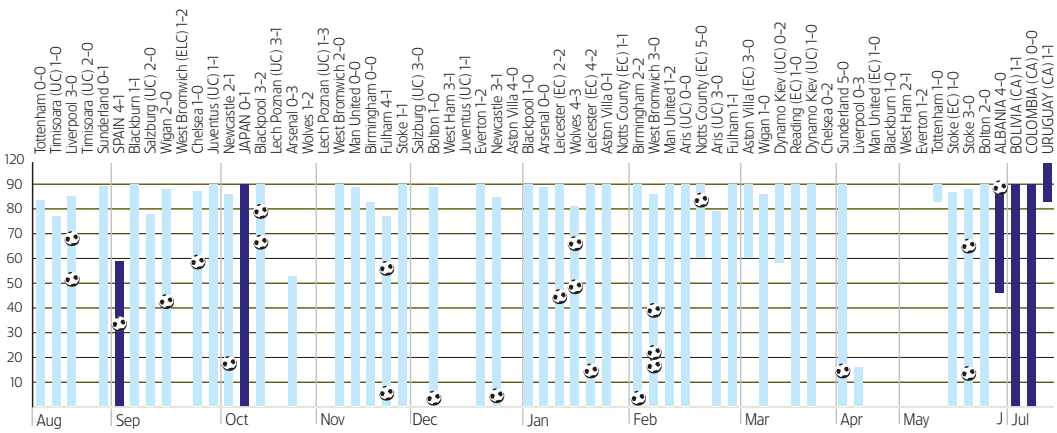
2008-09

■ Boca Juniors ■ Corinthians ■ West Ham ■ Manchester Utd ■ Manchester City ■ Juventus ■ Argentina





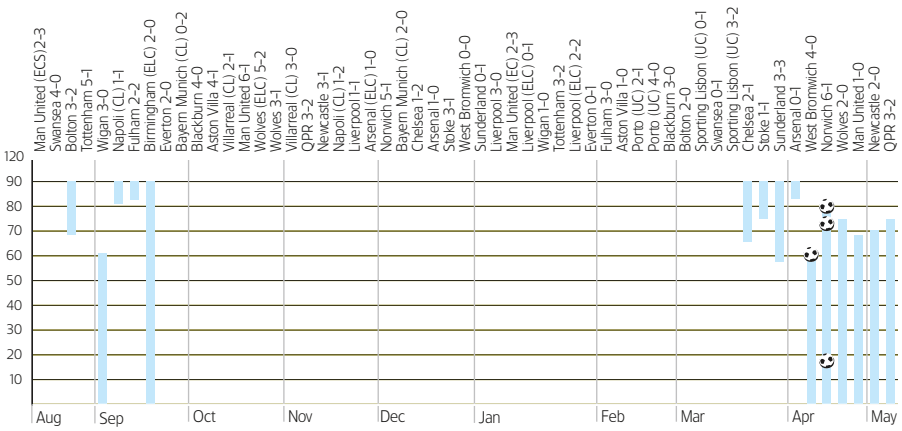
2009-10



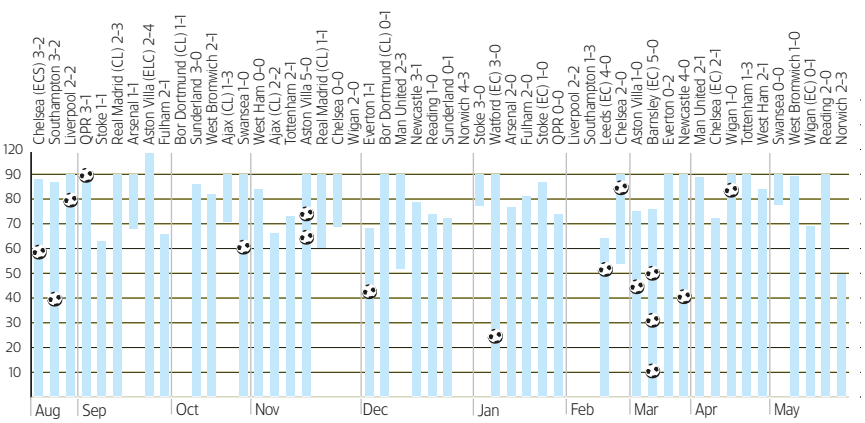
2010-11

May 14, 2011 – captains Manchester City to FA Cup Final success – the club's first major trophy for 35 years.

May 13, 2012 – the Premier League title is won in the most dramatic fashion with an injury-time goal against QPR at the Etihad Stadium.

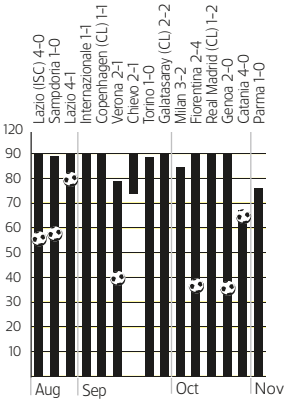


2011-12



2012-13

August 18, 2013 – celebrates scoring on his Juventus debut in the Italian Super Cup.



2013-14

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'Inverting the triangle' can combine 4-2-3-1 with 4-3-3

Jonathan Wilson says a deep playmaker is an attacking option

Found wanting...Tottenham Hotspur's Brazilian midfielder Paulinho fires wide against Swansea City – one of a number of chances he missed during the game

The designations given to formations rarely tell the whole story. For example, when does 4-4-2 become 4-4-1-1 become 4-2-3-1? And what if the right-sided forward tucks in to allow the right-back to overlap, but on the left the forward stays wide and the full-back sits back, sometimes shuffling into the middle to form a *de facto* back three. How would that be denoted?

A numerical formula can only ever be a crude representation of what is actually happening on the pitch. But, as in all spheres, generalisations can be useful in providing an overview, particularly in a historical context.

While it is not universally true, a basic evolution can be seen from 4-4-2 to 4-4-1-1 to 4-2-3-1, with the all-action, box-to-box central midfielders of the 1980s yielding to the combination of two holders – one ideally a pure sitter, the other capable of forward surges – and a hybrid midfielder/forward central creator. The extra defensive cover given by the two holders has liberated the wide players who, while still having defensive responsibility, have morphed – in the English game at least – from large-lunged chargers into something far more technically accomplished.

> Tottenham's problem was that they couldn't get forward to support the central striker

Recently the evolution has gone further. The second striker who became a support forward who became an attacking midfielder now appears – in certain cases – to be withdrawing deeper.

Tottenham Hotspur, perhaps, are the case study. At Crystal Palace on the opening day of this season, manager Andre Villas-Boas fielded Paulinho, Mousa Dembele and Gylfi Sigurdsson. For the next two games, at home to Swansea City and away to Arsenal, Etienne Capoue came in for Sigurdsson.

Tottenham won the first two of those games 1-0 and lost 1-0 at Arsenal. In all three the impression was of an immensely powerful side, a phalanx of three physically imposing players protecting the back four. This was almost a self-consciously robust Spurs – as though Villas-Boas had decided slipping out of the top four the previous season had been down to a classic case of the side's mental frailty, the style-over-substance reputation that has haunted them for years. With Capoue, Paulinho and Dembele there was substance aplenty – but not much creativity.

The cover in central midfield should have allowed the two full-backs – Kyle Walker and Danny Rose – to advance and link up with Andros Townsend (or Aaron Lennon against Palace) and Nacer

Chadli. Instead, Spurs suffered the problem they had early last term: they couldn't get men forward to support the central striker, which meant domination of possession didn't translate into chances.

Maybe the problem was disguised last season by the excellence of Gareth Bale. Seven times between January and the end of the season, he scored in the final 10 minutes of games to change a draw into a win or a defeat into a draw. Had that, perhaps, masked a structural flaw? If Paulinho had converted any of the six chances he missed against Swansea, of course, none of that might have been an issue, but in those three games Spurs scored only twice, both times from penalties.

Lop-sided triangle

While Villas-Boas insisted 4-3-3 would remain his set-up, to even term it a 4-3-3 seemed reductive. Spurs clearly operated a lop-sided triangle: against Swansea and Arsenal, Capoue sat deep and slightly to the right, with Dembele slightly ahead on his left and Paulinho, to the right of centre, the most advanced midfielder. For the fourth game, at home to Norwich City, Capoue was injured and the signings Spurs had made in the final week of the transfer window as Bale's move to Real Madrid finally went through had had little time to settle. Dembele and Paulinho took the deeper roles, with Christian Eriksen the most advanced of the three central midfielders and Sigurdsson replacing Chadli on the left.

Eriksen's impact as a creator was immediate as he set up both goals for Sigurdsson in a 2-0 win. Against Aston Villa, Lewis Holtby played in the role as Spurs stuck to essentially a halfway house between 4-2-3-1 and 4-3-3.

There can be an issue with getting men forward through the centre – and the onus is on the wide forwards to cut infield to support the striker – but there are also advantages to playing the central attacking midfielder slightly deeper.

Defensively, it makes it easier for him to join the two central holders, to form a three-man barrier, or to disrupt a deep-lying playmaker by forcing him to play through an extra body.

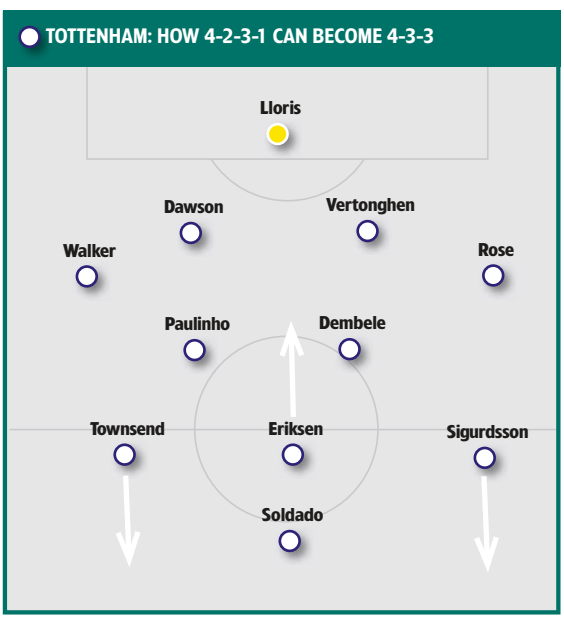
There can also be an advantage from an attacking point of view. One of the defensive rationales behind 4-2-3-1 is that, if the opponent is playing through a no10, having two holders provides additional cover against him. How do you combat that? Withdraw the no10 further, dragging him nearer your own two holders. This means that to close him down, one of the opposing holders has to advance, breaking the neat central square so many teams hold as a default defensive position.

Spurs may be a prime example, but Henrikh Mkhitaryan – who has played briefly as a holder at Shakhtar Donetsk – plays the role to perfection for Borussia Dortmund. If Wayne Rooney could be persuaded occasionally to play wide – as he has done successfully in the past – it's easy to imagine Shinji Kagawa flourishing in the role for Manchester United (as he, in fact did, at Dortmund). Arsenal have, at times, used Jack Wilshere in the position, although with Mesut Ozil in situ that is probably less likely in the immediate future.

Even Barcelona have looked at the shape. In the 3-0 win over Celta Vigo, rather than using Sergio Busquets or Alex Song at the back of midfield with two of Xavi, Andres Iniesta and Cesc Fabregas advanced of him, they "inverted the triangle" to use Gerardo Martino's phrase, playing Song and Busquets with Fabregas in front of them as the creator.

So, while it's not for everybody, and there are negatives as well as positives, pulling back the central creator is a way of combining the attacking flexibility of 4-2-3-1 with the defensive solidity of 4-3-3. **WS**

Case in point...Mkhitaryan (right) plays the deep-lying creative role to perfection for Borussia Dortmund



Creative impact...Eriksen

ClubFocus

ATLETICO MINEIRO

Nearly men no more

Tim Vickery profiles the South American club champions as they prepare to play in December's Club World Cup in Morocco

"If you hang out a black-and-white shirt on the line in the middle of a storm," wrote Belo Horizonte journalist Roberto Drummond, "then Atletico fans will cheer against the wind."

It is a wonderful metaphor for a club which imagines itself battling heroically against the elements – and usually, in the end, unsuccessfully. Indeed, being crowned champions of South America has come as a culture shock for generations who, in the words of local writer Roberto Andres, "grew accustomed to signings not working out, promises not being fulfilled, imprudent administration, things going wrong in the final straight and many mediocre performances, some which were frankly shameful".

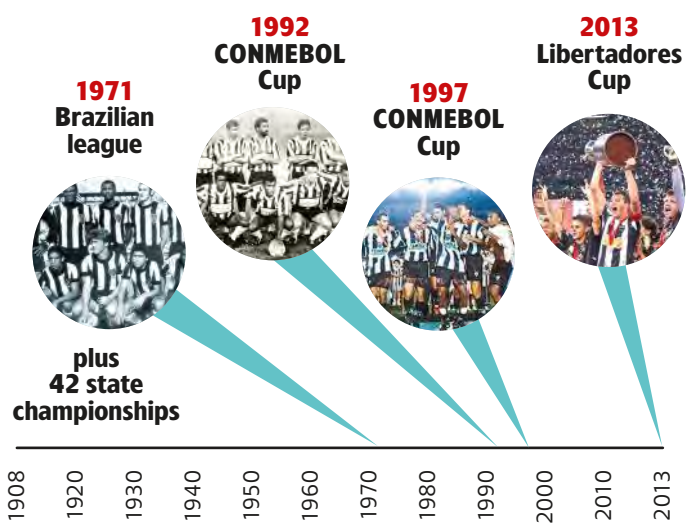
One might perhaps expect a more carefree air about a club founded by a group of rich students some 105 years ago in the then spanking new city of Belo Horizonte. But as the city expanded and the game of football grew along with it, Atletico acquired a popular touch, and an air of sweat and sacrifice accompanied its mass support.

Local rivals Cruzeiro were the first to acquire national attention, winning the Brazilian Cup in 1966, when, spearheaded by the young Tostao, they beat the Santos of Pele by the scarcely believable aggregate margin of 9-4. That competition was a forerunner to the Brazilian championship, which started in 1971 and firmly consolidated Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre in the south as important centres of the Brazilian game, behind Rio and Sao Paulo.

Atletico had the honour of winning the inaugural version of the national

Black and white army...Atletico's fans cheer on the team during their Libertadores Cup campaign

ATLETICO MINEIRO: 1908-2013



Atletico fans turned up for the second leg of the quarter-final against Tijuana wearing Scream masks in a bid to help give their side the edge

competition in 1971, but that was their last major title until an electric night this July when captain Rever raised the giant Libertadores Cup.

Fine sides

Atletico have had some fine sides over the years, especially the late 1970s and early 1980s with centre-forward Reinaldo, whose absence through injury in the 1982 World Cup may have been so significant. Brazil's much loved 1982 side also counted on Atletico stalwarts such as midfielder Toninho Cerezo, left-winger Eder, centre-back Luizinho and attacking midfielder Paulo Isodoro.

The club's leading domestic rivals at the time were Flamengo of Rio, who supplied the likes of Zico, Junior and Leandro to the 1982 team. The two met in the Libertadores Cup of 1981, in a game which was abandoned in the first half after Atletico controversially had five players sent off. Flamengo went on to win the trophy and that year's World Club Cup. The Atletico players, meanwhile, went empty-handed – which seemed to serve as a symbol for the club's ill fortune.

Thirty years later, still waiting for another major title, Cuca was appointed coach. It looked like a marriage doomed

Second wind...the signing of veteran Ronaldinho (right) proved a masterstroke as he thrived in a more central midfield role

to sadness. The nearly club was now in the hands of the nearly man, a footballing Don Quixote, the coach of the miserable countenance, whose teams so often produced attractive football but always seemed to fall short of the serious silverware.

True, he steered Atletico to safety in 2011, when another relegation – the club spent 2006 in the second division – looked a real possibility. But the sceptics were out in force

Champions...celebrating the Libertadores triumph

the following year when Ronaldinho and Jo, players whose careers had become overshadowed by off-the-field excesses, were added to the squad.

Instead the team clicked, playing the most eye-catching football in the country and finishing second in the domestic league – the frustration of missing out on the title was mitigated

THE POWER CURVE

The key figures behind Atletico Mineiro

ALEXANDRE KALIL

High profile, high octane club president whose second consecutive mandate comes to an end in December 2014. His father was president at the time of the great side of the early 1980s. Famous for announcing new signings on his Twitter account.

DANIEL DINIZ NEPOMUCENO

Son of a prominent Belo Horizonte family, at the age of 35 Atletico's vice-president has already made a name for himself as a local politician.

EDUARDO MALUF

Director of football who returned to the club in 2010 after spending a decade with local rivals Cruzeiro.

REINALDO

The club's top scorer and leading candidate to be Atletico's best player of all time, he could have been even better were it not for the knee injuries that blighted his career. He has been active in local politics and retains a keen interest in the club. A possible future candidate for the position of club president.

by qualification for the Libertadores Cup for the first time since 2000 and only the second since that painful 1981 elimination.

And the odyssey came to an end on an almost insanely emotionally charged night at the end of July, when Olimpia of Paraguay were overcome and Atletico were champions of South America.

It was a game for which those in a packed Mineirao stadium had paid the extraordinary average ticket price of around £75. But there was no reserved, elite air about the occasion. Rather, the match was a catharsis of years of dashed hopes and broken dreams.

When it was all over, the black-and-white part of Belo Horizonte celebrated with a crazed incredulity. The cockerel (the club's mascot) could now crow prouder than ever – and start preparing its flight to Morocco to fight for the Club World Cup. But along with the optimism there is a case for carrying some worry along as excess baggage. Atletico will travel accompanied by two pertinent questions: can the team recapture the form of the early stages of the Libertadores? And even if they can, will it be good enough to win the trophy?

Attacking brio

Atletico were irresistible in the first few months of this year, their attacking brio thoroughly justified Cuca's decision to bring Ronaldinho out into the middle of the field rather than restricting him to the position on the left flank that he had filled for the previous few years.

Surrounded by quick players, the full panorama of his passing range was once more revealed and the high point of the team's play were the through balls he hit for Bernard, the pacy little winger so adept at cutting in from the right. There was also the option of Diego Tardelli, usually on the other flank, or the forward bursts of the full-backs. He could also play long balls up to forward Jo, who was so proficient at receiving the ball with back to goal.

Hero...Victor saved a penalty in the quarter-final against Tijuana

Atletico were far and away the best team in the group stage of the Libertadores. But as the competition wore on they went off the boil. In part it was the consequence of the injury suffered by central midfielder Leandro Donizete. Without his capacity to link the play Atletico gave the impression of being two teams: a defensive unit and an attacking group, isolated from each other.

> "This is why I came back to Brazil. People said that I was done but we have proved that isn't the case"
>
> Ronaldinho on the Libertadores Cup triumph

As the quality of their play declined they became dependent on home form. They were poor in the first, away legs of the quarter-finals, semi-finals and the decider itself. But every time they scraped through.

In stoppage time at home to Tijuana of Mexico they were a penalty away from elimination until keeper Victor saved and they went through on away goals. In both the semi-final against Argentina's Newell's Old Boys and the Final against Olimpia it took a late equaliser to force a shoot-out.

The champions of South America did not actually score more goals than any of their last three opponents.

Since then they have lost Bernard to Shakhtar Donetsk of Ukraine – although Fernandinho is an interesting replacement – and last September came the news of Ronaldinho's muscle injury – probably the most serious of his entire career – which appears to be threatening his participation in the Club World Cup.

A quick healer, the probability is that he will be able to play – but will he be match fit? And is the veteran still capable of imposing himself against opponents as impressive as Bayern Munich? All of Brazil's last few coaches have discarded him after coming to the conclusion that he is not.

In his absence, Atletico have coasted through this year's domestic league campaign in the traditional manner of Brazilian teams that have just won the Libertadores. They are the fourth consecutive club from their country to be crowned South American champions. The only team to go on and win the world title was Corinthians last year, the first time the Europeans were defeated since the "sit back, soak up the

Emotional...Mineiro coach Cuca celebrates a goal in the second leg of the Final against Olimpia

pressure and launch a single counter-attack" strategy of fellow Brazilians Sao Paulo and Internacional, an approach that saw off Liverpool and Barcelona respectively in 2005 and 2006.

Corinthians were not nearly as defensive but, unusually compact for a Brazilian side, their method was based on solidity. Indeed, in last year's Club World Cup they mustered just two serious efforts on target: the headers from Paolo Guerrero that gave them single-goal wins over Al Ahly and Chelsea.

Ageing limbs

Atletico may be a more expressive side, but they are also a more vulnerable one. And there are some ageing limbs in the defence. In a potential Final clash against Bayern Munich it would be fascinating to see how they cope with the tempo and dynamism of Pep Guardiola's men.

The current Bayern coach, of course, showed Ronaldinho the door when he took over at Barcelona in 2008. And after his side thrashed Santos in the 2011 World Club Final, Guardiola poured salt on the wound by commenting that Barcelona had treated the ball in the way that his grandparents had told him that Brazil used to do.

So there are some scores to be settled in Morocco, where there should be a lively atmosphere for the duel.

Atletico will take with them a noisy continent of supporters, all of whom will be confident that the black-and-white shirt will bear the strain if it is hung out on the line against the full force of a Bavarian storm. **WS**

Outlet...winger Tardelli has benefited from Ronaldinho's astute passing

THE SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS

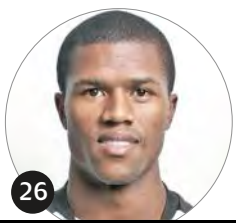
GIOVANNI

Age 26 (05.02.87)
Back-up throughout the Libertadores campaign, he was signed in 2011 after impressing with Gremio Prudente in the previous year's Brazilian championship. Has had some opportunities recently while Victor was on duty with the national team.

VICTOR

Age 30 (21.01.83)
Serious, steady and ever-present in the Libertadores, where his penalty saves made him one of the heroes of the campaign. Joined last year after making his name with Gremio. Brazil's first-choice keeper post-South Africa 2010 and recently recalled to the national set-up.

DEFENDERS



Carlos CESAR

Age 26 (21.04.87)
Reserve right-back who was an unused substitute during the Libertadores campaign, but appears to be winning the race to be the leading back-up for Rocha.

Junior CESAR

Age 31 (09.04.82)
Quick little left-back now with his fifth major Brazilian club, he has also had a spell in Mexico. Lost his place in the starting line-up during the Libertadores, but got his chance again due to injuries.

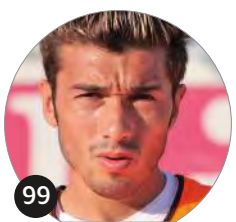
EMERSON

Age 30 (03.05.83)
Centre-back signed in August to add defensive cover. A late bloomer, he made his name in the last five years with southern clubs Avai and Coritiba. A booming left foot means he often gets on the scoresheet.

MIDFIELDERS

Lucas CANDIDO

Age 19 (25.12.93)
Recently promoted to the senior ranks, he is also capable of filling in at left-back. He has made a positive impression and has been capped by Brazil at under-20 level.



Jesus DATOLO (Arg)

Age 29 (19.05.84)
The much-travelled Argentina international is a pacy left-footer who can also operate at left-back. Signed from Internacional of Porto Alegre in August, but suffered an injury-hit first few months.

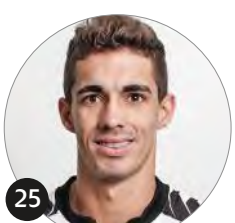
Leandro DONIZETE

Age 31 (18.05.82)
Signed from Coritiba in 2011, he knits the side together from a central role. Badly missed when a thigh injury kept him out of the closing stages of the Libertadores, he has been playing his way back to full fitness with appearances off the bench in the Brazilian championship.

FORWARDS

ALECSANDRO

Age 32 (04.02.81)
Reserve centre-forward signed for the Libertadores, where he made eight appearances as a substitute, scoring one goal. A consistent marksman, with over 80 goals in the Brazilian championship for six different clubs. Brother of injured left-back Richarlyson.



Neto BEROLA

Age 26 (18.11.87)
Signed in 2010 after showing promise for Vitoria in his native Bahia. Does his best work cutting in from wide areas and is more of a dribbler than a goalscorer. Made one appearance as a substitute in the Libertadores campaign.

FERNANDINHO

Age 27 (25.11.85)
Wriggly, sinuous, stocky left-footed winger signed from Qatar in August as a replacement for Bernard. Had a spell in Hong Kong before making his name with Gremio Prudente in the 2009 Brazilian championship. However, never quite lived up to expectations during two years with Sao Paulo.

THE STADIUM

ESTADIO INDEPENDENCIA

(capacity 23,018)

Atletico were nearly relegated in 2011 when Belo Horizonte was without a stadium and they were obliged to play their home games out of town. The giant Mineirao stadium, a copy of the Maracana, has since re-opened, but Atletico have not been able to agree terms with the consortium administering the stadium, and only reluctantly used it for the second leg of the Libertadoes Final. Instead they have based themselves in the Independencia (right), built for the 1950 World Cup – it was the scene of the famous USA win over England – and re-opened last year after a thorough modernisation. The long-term wisdom of staying there is open to question; should the club of the masses limit itself to a stadium with a capacity of 20,000 (officially 23,018, but there are blind spots), leaving rivals Cruzeiro to take over the much larger Mineirao?

THE KIT

Home Away

15

GILBERTO SILVA

Age 37 (07.10.76)
Once of Arsenal, he won over 90 caps for Brazil as a defensive midfielder, but has now returned to his original position of centre-back. Made six appearances (plus two off the bench) in the Libertadores and remains, in his own quiet way, an important dressing-room presence.

29

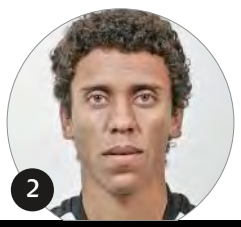
MICHEL

Age 23 (15.02.90)
Right-back, on loan from Almeria in Spain, who stepped in for the second leg of the Libertadores Final when Rocha was suspended. Has since struggled with injuries.

4

REVER

Age 28 (04.01.85)
Club captain who joined Atletico in 2010 following a short spell with Wolfsburg, where Steve McClaren found him surplus to requirements. Imposing centre-back who is elegant on the ball but can look vulnerable. In contention for a place in Brazil's World Cup squad.



2

Marcos ROCHA

Age 24 (11.12.88)
Local player who, after a number of loan spells, was the surprise success of last year's league campaign. A quick, attacking right-back who recently won two Brazil caps, he is not a natural defender and is inclined to be hot-headed. Was suspended for the second leg of the Libertadores Final.

3

Leonardo SILVA

Age 34 (22.06.79)
Centre-back who joined in 2011 and has since found the most solid form of his career. Outstanding in the air, his late headed equaliser forced penalties in the second leg of the Libertadores Final.

28

JOSUE

Age 34 (19.07.79)
Signed from Wolfsburg at the start of the year. A frequent substitute, he stepped into the starting line-up for the last four games of the Libertadores after Donizete's injury. A member of Brazil's 2010 World Cup squad and won the Club World Club with Sao Paulo in 2005.

27

LUAN

Age 23 (11.08.90)
A curious, hunched-shouldered little figure brought in after shining for Ponte Preta in last year's national championship. An attacking, wide player but always willing to track back. A frequent substitute in the Libertadores who weighed in with two important goals.

5

PIERRE

Age 31 (19.01.82)
Defensively-minded, he was surprisingly let go by Palmeiras – where he was a fans' favourite – in 2011. Covers and tackles well, but offers little in possession. An ever present in the Libertadores Cup campaign.

10

RONALDINHO

Age 33 (21.03.80)
Has rolled back the years to recall his great days of the previous decade. A thigh-muscle injury leaves him a doubt for the Club World Cup – the only major prize this twice World Player of the Year has not won.

88

ROSINEI

Age 30 (03.05.83)
Tough customer who made his name with Corinthians and was signed from Club America of Mexico at the end of last year. Made five substitute appearances during the Libertadores campaign.

17

GUILHERME

Age 25 (22.10.88)
Playmaker who made his name with local rivals Cruzeiro where he was considered a huge prospect. After spells in Ukraine and Russia he joined Atletico in 2011, but injuries have disrupted his progress.

7

JO

Age 26 (20.03.87)
Finishing top scorer in the Libertadores campaign won him an unexpected but successful recall to the Brazil squad. Lanky left-footer and good in the air, he appears to have regained the focus that he lost in English football with Manchester City and Everton.

9

Diego TARDELLI

Age 28 (10.05.85)
Three separate spells in Europe, plus one in Qatar, indicate a wayward career for a player with an excellent change of pace and who can operate anywhere in attack. In his second spell with Atletico, the former Brazil international is still optimistic of a World Cup spot.

THE COACH

CUCA

Age 50 (07.06.63)
Real name Alexi Stival, he was an attacking midfielder in the 1980s and 1990s for a number of first division clubs, especially in his native south of Brazil, before embarking on a coaching career in 1998. Came to prominence with Goias in 2003, since when he has coached big clubs in all four main centres of the Brazilian game: Rio, Sao Paulo, Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte. He has a reputation for producing attractive sides, but the serious silverware had always eluded him until the Libertadores triumph. Has been with Atletico since 2011.

Facetoface

FRANK DE BOER

“I aim to become the first Ajax coach to win four league titles in a row”

The Amsterdam club’s coach has his sights set on overtaking his illustrious predecessors Van Gaal and Michels

It’s three years since you took over at Ajax. How would you assess your time as coach so far?
First of all, I think the philosophy of Ajax and how the club wants its teams to play is back. We look to develop our own players and progress them into our first team. We have also been successful domestically and we are happy with what we have done so far. But we also have a history of being competitive in Europe and that is our next goal. We know it is going to be very difficult, but hopefully it is something we will achieve in the future. The name Ajax has a tradition in the European Cup and it is natural for us to target the highest level.

You are only the third Ajax coach to win three straight titles, after Louis Van Gaal and Rinus Michels...
It’s an honour to stand alongside them because they are recognised as two of the best coaches in our history. At Ajax you are always aiming to finish top of the league, so in a way you don’t see it as a massive achievement because that is what the traditions of the club expect of you. But I am pleased with our success and I will aim to beat that record because no Ajax coach has ever won four in a row.

How important is it to have so many former players involved in the set-up?
Very important. Our young players must recognise what our philosophy is and what it means to play for Ajax. They look around and see legends who have been there and done it in the first team. That is a great incentive. They can seek advice from these former players and learn a great deal. These ex-players understand the fabric of the club and help to ensure the Ajax way runs through every department.

Much is made of Barcelona’s football philosophy. Do you see parallels with your ethos at Ajax?
Yes, there are similarities in our styles and the way we feel football should be played. Obviously, the big difference now is that Barcelona are one of the best teams in Europe. Our problem is that we do not compete in one of the strongest leagues. We are part of what I feel is the sixth-best league and this leads to problems keeping hold of our star players. Barcelona have pretty much had the same team for a number of years. The likes of Xavi, Iniesta, Busquets and Valdes have grown up together and shared experiences, which has made them stronger. They have not needed to move as they are playing in La Liga.

You were linked with Barcelona in the summer. Is that a long-term ambition, particularly as you played there?
Well, there is a symmetry with my playing career and the clubs’ philosophies, so maybe one day, you never know. But I am only focusing on Ajax now. I signed a new contract last summer until 2017. My family and I are very happy.

Do you feel Ajax can ever win the European Cup again?
It is going to be very difficult. But still, you have to dream, don’t you? We focus a great deal on our youth programme and have had great success with it in the past. Hopefully we can bring more talented players through to the first team and on to a higher level. If four or five players of exceptional quality come through at the same time then maybe we can surprise some of the big teams. Our hope is that maybe every five years you have the personnel to really compete in Europe.

Your domestic success is all the more remarkable given you’ve continually been forced to sell your key players...
It can be very frustrating. You get a group of players with real talent and start to believe that you have the right blend to achieve something in Europe. I felt that was the case this summer, and then we lost Christian Eriksen and Toby Alderweireld. But on the other hand you want to help the next crop go on to reach the same level as the likes of Eriksen or beyond. Then it becomes like an adventure because it is great to work with youngsters and see them develop and get better with each passing month.

What have you made of the new-look Holland under Van Gaal?
They have done well. The good thing is that they have two very experienced players in Arjen Robben and Robin Van Persie. That is very important for a young squad. The youngsters can learn a lot from exceptional talents like those two. I hope [Wesley] Sneijder comes back into favour too. Hopefully the team can keep developing over the coming year. There is a good blend of talent and it’s just a case of getting the right mix with experience.

Do you see yourself managing the national team one day?
Why not? Right now I’m still just a young coach and I am not ready for the national team. You need more experience for that role. You have to be more of a manager than a coach because you don’t see the players every day. It’s a completely different role with a lot of pressure. At the moment I am happy at Ajax and still have some big challenges to tackle here.

If and when you do eventually move on do you envisage your assistant, Dennis Bergkamp, succeeding you?
From what I gather that is not something he is thinking about right now. I don’t get that feeling from him. He is afraid of flying which would cause a problem if he wanted to be head coach. That would be a big issue for him. I think he prefers a role behind the scenes.”

Interview by Paul Hassall

De Boer played more than 300 times for Ajax, including in the 1995 European Cup Final victory over Milan in Austria. He went on to play for Barcelona and ended his career in Qatar. He is Holland’s most-capped outfield player of all time, with 112 appearances for the national side.

On the prospect of Qatar 2022 being played in the winter...

"For me, a winter tournament would be great because then you have the best temperatures for that part of the world. If it took place in the summer it would be almost impossible to play to the highest level in that heat"

Facetoface
LARS LAGERBACK

"You have to treat players as normal people and they respond to that on the pitch"

The Swede, who coached his homeland in the finals of five consecutive major tournaments, has led Iceland to the brink of the 2014 World Cup finals

When you took the Iceland job in October 2011, what did you see when you first got there in terms of the talent pool?
When I looked into it the under-21s had qualified for the [2011] European Championship in Denmark. They are all 23 or 24 now and I thought it would be really interesting to work with young talented players, and some of the other players that were older too. We also have a lot of co-operation between the Nordic countries. It is better when you are coaching to work with interesting players and I knew the character of the people in Iceland was very good.

Why has Iceland been able to create a talented national side from such a small population? What are they doing right that other nations aren't?
The people are not spoilt and they are taking care of themselves. I like the country and the society as a whole. From the technical part, a few years back they built seven full-sized indoor halls, and the youngsters can play and train all year round. One of the reasons Swedish clubs have a problem in doing well in Europe is that we have too short a season. In Iceland they have a winter season indoor and a summer season outdoor. Training and playing the whole year is the main reason they are doing so well.

Is talent born or moulded? Is it nature or nurture that is most important?
It is a little bit of both. The really, really good players have some talent, of course, but all players that go into the national team have some kind of talent that they are born with. But no one gets good if they don't have the right character and attitude and aren't prepared to work for it. Twenty years ago some players could get away with it. But, today, if you are not 100 per cent professional, you can't.

You've managed a lot of very big characters, such as Zlatan Ibrahimovic. What did you learn from that and how did you apply it to Iceland? Or is it about building a collective of players?
My philosophy that I learned through the years, because I started as a teacher in sports, is that when you work with a group of professional footballers you have a dialogue with them and they must take a big responsibility for themselves otherwise they can't be really good. I can't tell them what to do in every situation on and off the pitch. If they don't take responsibility they don't belong in my squad. I have very few examples where players haven't responded to that. Look at now. After training the players are free to go out after lunch if they like. As long as they behave. Treat players as normal people and they respond to that on the pitch.

You usually play with two strikers, but you have three very good ones at the moment in Ajax's Kolbeinn Sigborsson, Eidur Gudjohnsen of Club Brugge and Heerenveen's Alfred Finnbogason. How do you fit them in?
That's the most interesting part of football. You have to organise the team for the way the players are playing and find good roles for them. But if you have really, really skilful players like Gylfi [Sigurdsson] playing for Tottenham, it is most important to find the best role for him and give him as much freedom as we can. Of course, he is very loyal to the team in attack and defence, so it is very easy. That is basically what I changed in my philosophy when I started coaching national teams and working with world-class players. If players have those skills you have to give them as much freedom as possible – as long as they don't disturb the team.

Iceland's World Cup campaign saw some sensational results – such as the Switzerland game when you were 4-1 down at half-time and came back to draw 4-4. How did you turn it round?
Sometimes its easier when you don't have a good first half. Maybe we were a little overambitious. We prepare the players in case we have to be more offensive in the second half. We put Eidur [Gudjohnsen] in to a different role. My experience is you can't speak too much at half-time because the players are not listening if you give them too much information. Prepare before the game and if you need to speak a lot to someone, speak to them individually. I've been around 30 years so I'm guessing I can give some advice!

You've had great times with Sweden, but would taking Iceland to the finals be your greatest achievement?
When we took Sweden to the World Cup and Euros, winning the last qualifying game was really big. Also, one of the biggest games I ever experienced, with the most satisfaction, was when we drew 1-1 with Argentina in the last game [of the group stage, where Sweden finished top] of the World Cup in 2002 and advanced to the last 16. So yes, I have experienced some great games, but [taking Iceland to Brazil] would be the top of the list.

A lot of smaller nations will now be looking to emulate Iceland's success. What advice can you give them?
The only chance for smaller countries is to develop youth players so they can go to top, bigger leagues. With all due respect to smaller countries, and also Sweden, which is a small country in the big football world, if the Icelandic or Swedish national teams didn't have their best players in a good league, they couldn't do well. That is the only advice that counts: that you educate young players so they can get out to the bigger leagues in Europe.

Interview by James Montague

Lagerback took Sweden to two World Cups and three Euro finals. He also led Nigeria at the 2010 World Cup. If he can help them to beat Croatia in the play-offs, Iceland – with a population of just 360,000 – will be the smallest nation ever to qualify for the finals.

On working with Zlatan Ibrahimovic...

"The first year [with Sweden] he was mostly on the bench and came on as a sub. But the better he got you had to find a role for him. He is that kind of player"

6 of the best

Nick Bidwell selects half a dozen of the game's lowest-salaried stars

Low earners

1 Saido BERAHINO

West Bromwich Albion (Eng)

Jeremy Peace, West Brom's long-serving chairman, is renowned for his budgetary prudence and keeping a tight grip on the club's purse strings. So he will have been delighted to see the rookie striker provide the ultimate in value for money this season.

In comparison to the £1million a month banked by Premier League big hitters such as Wayne Rooney, Robin Van Persie and Yaya Toure, the 20-year-old's weekly wage of £850 is a drop in the ocean. But that has not prevented the Albion academy graduate from making a blistering start to his top-flight career. He netted the winner in his side's 2-1 win at Manchester United in September – their first victory at Old Trafford since 1978 – and has scored regularly for England's under-21 team.

Born in the east African republic of Burundi, Berahino fled his war-torn homeland at the age of 10 and, along with his family, headed for a new life in the English city of Birmingham. A decade on, stardom beckons. And with it, of course, the vastly improved contract that he so richly deserves.

2 Nicolas DE PREVILLE

Reims (Fra)

Slowly rebuilding after more than three decades of maladministration, evaporating finances and sporting underachievement, Reims simply cannot come close to matching today's average Ligue 1 pay packet of €48,000 a month. Yet thanks to a solid scouting network and persuasive recruitment agents, the club from the Champagne region are making a fine job of punching above their weight. And for a considerably smaller outlay of just €30,000 per month, they have a gem of a young front man in this France Under-20 international.

Since joining Reims from Istres midway through last term, the aristocratic-sounding Nicolas De Roussel de Preville – to give him his full name – has slowly but surely moved up in the footballing world, transforming himself from a fourth-choice attacker with a history of groin trouble to an automatic starter and matchwinner.

A versatile forward who possesses speed, cunning and potency, the 22-year-old hit the headlines early this season with France's goal of the month for September: an acrobatic volley against Guingamp that would not have been out of place in the sharpshooting showreel of former Marseille great Jean-Pierre Papin.

3 Jonas HOFMANN

Borussia Dortmund (Ger)

Just because the 21-year-old attacking midfielder sits rock bottom in the Dortmund pay rankings with a basic salary of €0.3million a year, do not make the mistake of assuming he is a negligible quantity on the field.

Eased into the club's senior set-up this summer, the Germany Under-21 international swiftly established himself as super-sub material, regularly catching the eye with his dynamism, instinctive finishing and creativity.

The crowd at Signal Iduna Park have already taken him to their hearts and everyone of a yellow-and-black persuasion can only be thankful that Mainz's attempt to prise him away last spring were rejected out of hand.

In his second season at Dortmund after being plucked from Hoffenheim's juniors, he recently signed his first pro contract, which ties him to last season's Champions League runners-up until 2017 and trebled his wages.

4 Aleksandar MITROVIC

Anderlecht (Blg)

Even though the €11,500 weekly wages of the teenage Serb striker look like a spot in the welfare line when placed alongside the stratospheric weekly rewards of Cristiano Ronaldo's €404,000 or Zlatan Ibrahimovic's €250,000, a certain Jose Mourinho is of the opinion that the 19-year-old will soon be drawing from the same megabuck salary well.

In Belgrade for a recent 1-1 World Cup qualifying draw between Serbia and Croatia, the Chelsea manager needed no prompting to shower the home side's goalscorer with praise, naming him the best player on the pitch and concluding that the "boy had everything to become a great attacker".

A €5million signing from Partizan Belgrade in the summer, Mitrovic is big, strong and a natural converter of chances. Skilled with either foot, he is adept at holding the ball up and bringing others into play, and it is not hard to see why he was the Belgian club's most expensive-ever signing.

5 Nicola MURRU

Cagliari (Ita)

The Sardinian club's impressive left-back might be light years away from the massive annual income of €6.5m currently enjoyed by Roma's Daniele De Rossi – who is the top earner in Serie A – but the 18-year-old's pay is moving in the right direction.

Despite being one of the most promising young defenders in the country, Murru was still on a youth-team contract of €30,000 a year when this season got under way. However, the constant plaudits for his speed, energy and ability to deliver accurate crosses at full pelt saw him sign a proper professional contract in October.

A product of the Cagliari youth system, he was inducted into their schoolboy ranks at the age of six and broke into the senior side in December 2011, going on to establish himself last term as a top-flight mainstay. A little too impulsive in his tackling on occasions, he also needs to sharpen up his off-field behaviour, having recently incurred the wrath of Italy Under-21 coach Luigi Di Biagio for ignoring a curfew.

6 Sheanon WILLIAMS

Philadelphia Union (USA)

While no fewer than 10 of his team-mates pulled in a meatier base salary than his unremarkable package of US$105,000 a year, no one at PPL Park has been able to match the 23-year-old Boston-born right-back for consistency, leadership and sheer indefatigable spirit.

Outstanding for the last 18 months, he has under-17 and under-20 caps, and there is much to the idea that at a more fashionable MLS team he would already figure in the plans of senior national coach Jurgen Klinsmann.

Bought from USL Pro League club Harrisburg City Islanders – a feeder for Union – in 2010, he is the complete full-back: defensively watchful yet full of fizz on the overlap. This season he has numerous assists to his name and his trademark long throws are a constant threat. He played his 100th game for Union in September and is tipped to be on a European club's payroll soon.

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Talentscout

Oliver TORRES

CLUB	Atletico Madrid
COUNTRY	Spain
POSITION	Midfielder
AGE	19 (10.11.94)
HONOURS	2012 European Under-19 Championship

Having been marked out as a star of the future, the Atletico Madrid teenager finally made his first start for the club in October against Real Betis at the Vicente Calderon, due to the absence of Arda Turan through injury. And it took him just 13 seconds to open the scoring.

"This is a dream come true, and on my dad's birthday too," he beamed afterwards as Atletico went on to win 5-0. "To wake up in the morning and know that you're going to be a starter for Atletico is wonderful."

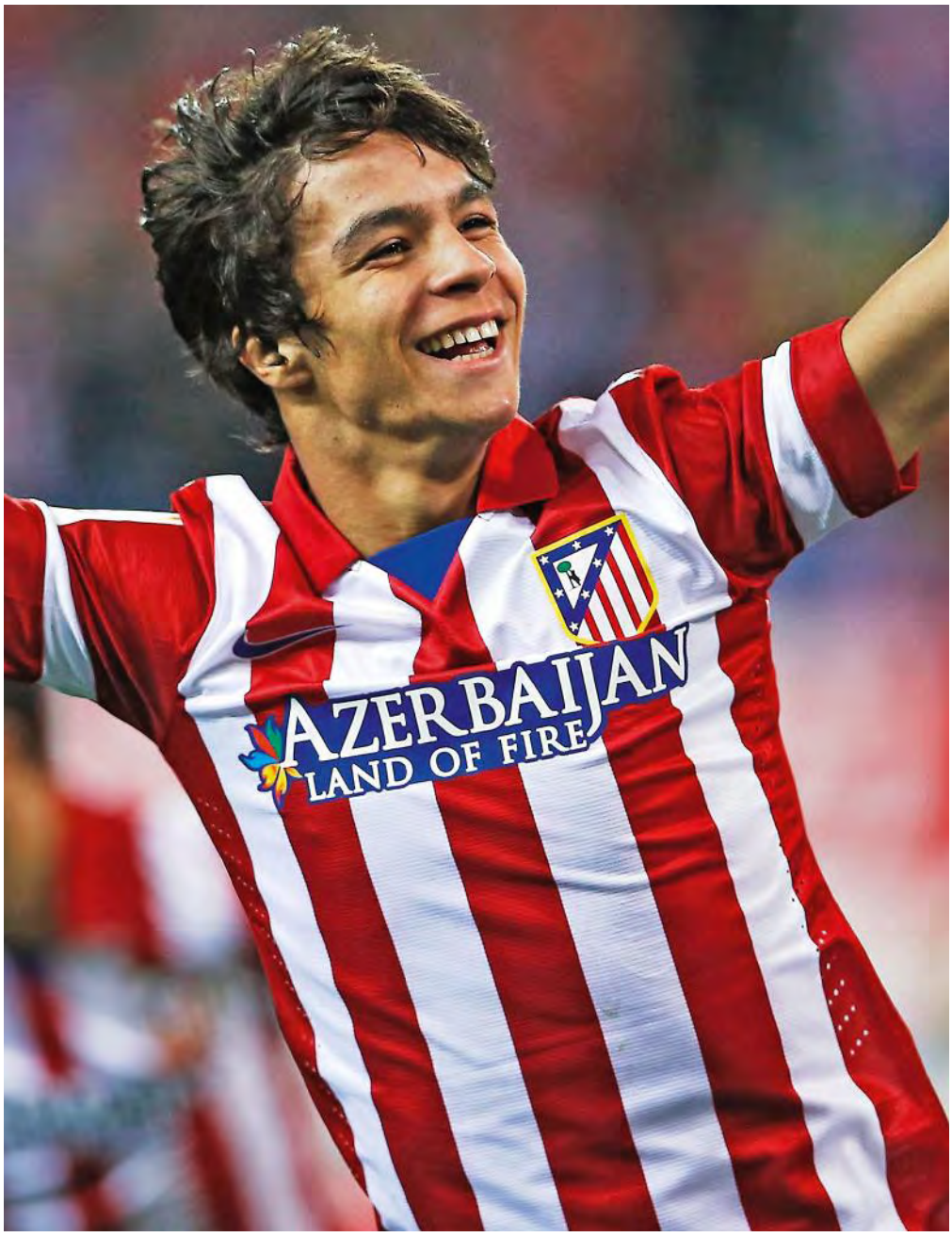
The goal was the fastest in the club's history and, for many, the only surprise was that it took Torres so long to make his mark.

> "It all came together. I felt like a kid in a sweetshop"
>
> Torres after his debut goal

Born in Navalmoral de la Mata, Extremadura, he joined the club as a 10-year-old – although his family say they were convinced he was going to be a footballer from the age of four. He was even named Oliver, on the insistence of his brother, after the football-playing cartoon character Oliver Atom.

Blessed of great vision, superb technique and a softness of touch, the youngster has always stood out. Even the way he moves, almost gliding, is different. The signs were there during the club's pre-season tour this summer that he could be very special indeed. He signed a new deal until 2018 and was included in the senior squad.

First-team opportunities, however, were few and far between. Before his start against Betis, he had played 15 games for Atletico but racked up just 332 minutes, never playing more than 35 at a time. But Atletico's great start to the campaign allowed coach Diego Simeone to help relieve the pressure by bringing him into the side slowly.



Fast starter...Torres celebrates his 13-second opener for Atletico Madrid against Real Betis, which was the quickest goal in the club's history

Although Torres himself admits his light frame was a "disadvantage" in such an intense, strong, quick side, he says: "I have had to adapt." Slowly but surely he has worked on developing physically, as the club monitor his progress carefully. And Simeone, he says, is right on top of him. Asked if the coach should have played him sooner, Torres insists: "Everyone has handled [my development] very well."

After his lightning start against Betis, it may be harder and harder now to leave him out.

Sid Lowe

Jaime ARRASCAITA

CLUB	Bolivar
COUNTRY	Bolivia
POSITION	Forward
AGE	20 (02.09.93)
CAPS	3 (1 goal)
INTERNATIONAL DEBUT	August 2013, v Venezuela

It is 20 years since Bolivia last qualified for the World Cup finals, and the country's latest big hope wasn't even born when the likes of Marco Etcheverry, Erwin Sanchez and Julio Cesar Baldivieso were booking their place at USA 94.

Introduced at half-time in his side's final home qualifier of the latest campaign, against Ecuador, Arrascaita made an instant impression, opening the scoring after just two minutes in an eventual 1-1 draw.

He had only made his first-team breakthrough with his club side in July, but national coach Xabier Azkargorta – who had also been in charge of the 1994 World Cup team – had seen something he liked and gave the youngster his international debut the following month.

Some four years earlier, Bolivar's highly respected youth coach Oscar Villegas had been similarly impressed. "At first glance I noted his technical excellence," he says of Arrascaita. "He was very slightly built, but we thought we could work with him on the physical aspect and build him up a bit."

But despite football being in the blood – an uncle is former international centre-forward Augusto Andaveris – the hardest part was convincing his parents.

Although born in La Paz, Arrascaita grew up in a small agricultural town where he was making good educational progress. "It was difficult to convince his family to let him go to La Paz and join the club because he was still at college," explains Villegas.

Now, though, there are no regrets as he learns from experienced club-mates such as midfielder Walter Flores and Uruguayan striker William Ferreira. "They keep talking to me," says Arrascaita, "correcting a few things and reminding me of the importance of keeping my feet on the ground and working hard every day."

> "We have to support [Arrascaita] and help him grow, both as a footballer and in physical terms"
>
> Bolivia captain Ronald Raldes

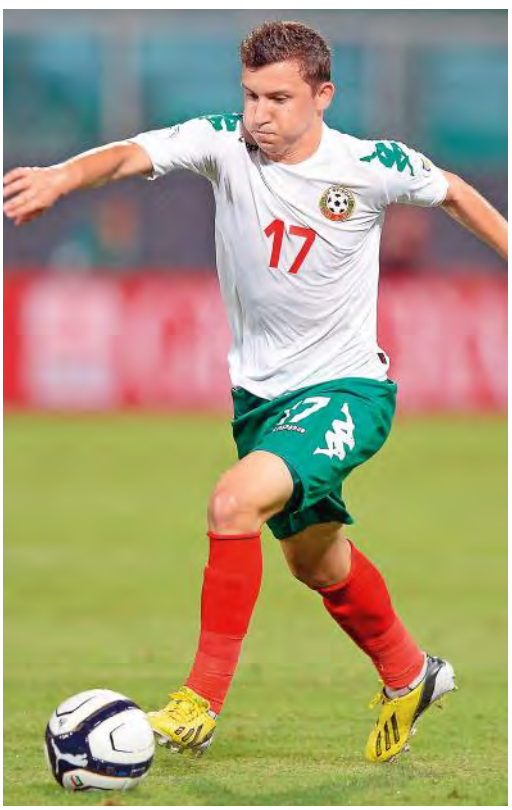
A jinking, elusive runner who can strike the ball with surprising force, he has the ability to make things happen. But can he keep doing it?

"Arrascaita has arrived almost from nowhere," says national captain Ronald Raldes.

"He has taken a giant step. Now he has to sustain it."

Tim Vickery

Big Bolivian hope...Arrascaita scored against Ecuador



Setback...a broken ankle may sideline Nedelev until the new year

Todor NEDELEV

CLUB	Botev Plovdiv
COUNTRY	Bulgaria
POSITION	Midfielder
AGE	20 (07.02.93)
CAPS	3 (0 goals)
INTERNATIONAL DEBUT	August 2013, v Macedonia

Defeats in Armenia and at home to the Czech Republic in October ended any hopes Bulgaria may have had of sneaking into the World Cup play-offs, but their chances had already been greatly reduced by the absence of the hottest property in the country at the moment.

A fractured ankle in Botev Plovdiv's 6-0 Bulgarian Cup victory over Neftochimic prevented Nedelev adding to the three senior caps he had won this year...and could have ended his domestic career. Due to join Mainz in January after signing a pre-contract with the Bundesliga club, it is feared he may not now play again until the new year.

Having broken into Botev's first-team last season the youngster caught the attention further afield this term, scoring three goals in his side's early Europa League excursions and twice on the opening day of the Bulgarian league campaign as Botev came from behind to beat Levski Sofia 2-1.

Yet despite his rapid promotion to the national side, and an imminent move to Germany, the young playmaker remains firmly grounded.

"I have achieved nothing yet," he says. "It is too early to get big headed. I like to score goals but I am even happier when I help my team-mates to score."

> "I have no girlfriend because, at the moment, I am thinking just for football. This is the world for me"
>
> Todor Nedelev

Botev centre-forward Ivan Tsvetkov, who played in Holland for many seasons, is more forthcoming, however, stating: "Todor Nedelev has a natural goal instinct, like Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Wesley Sneijder."

Rumen Paytashev

Ibragim TSALLAGOV

CLUB	Krylia Sovetov
COUNTRY	Russia
POSITION	Defender
AGE	22 (12.12.90)

Russia coach Fabio Capello may not be one of the game's great risk takers, but he would be well advised to put his conservative instincts on ice and take a good, hard look at Krylia Sovetov's uncapped right-back.

Blazing a trail in the domestic league this season, Tsallagov has been outperforming full-backs of vastly more experience and standing. After two years of excellence with the national under-21 side he has more than paid his international dues.

While Zenit's Aleksandr Anyukov, who is a former Krylia player himself, is sure to start at the World Cup finals in Brazil, the wiry 22-year-old is very much in the shake-up for the role of deputy – along with Arseniy Logashov of Rostov, Kuban Krasnodar's Aleksei Kozlov and CSKA Moscow's Kirill Nababkin.

A native of the North Caucasus city of Vladikavkaz, Tsallagov has an exemplary all-round game. Although yet to fully mature physically, he compensates with sound positioning and speed off the mark. In an emergency, he can also fill in at left-back or as a midfield holder.

Tsallagov started all three games for Russia at this summer's Euro Under-21 finals in Israel

In contrast to Logashov – who despite his athleticism and footballing brain rarely advances beyond the half-way line – the lively Tsallagov pushes forward incessantly, so much so that he has been going toe-to-toe with strikers Luis Caballero and Sergey Kornilenko in the club's goalscoring charts.

Now in his fifth campaign in the Krylia first-team, he recently put pen to paper on a new contract which will theoretically keep him at the Samara-based club until 2016. However, doubts remain as to whether he will go the distance. Leading Russian newspaper *Izvestia* believes CSKA Moscow are desperate to recruit him, while it is rumoured a number of Italian and German clubs regard him equally highly.

Naturally, Krylia officials have a totally different take on the situation. "As far as Ibragim and this club are concerned, we have a mutual desire to continue our collaboration," says Krylia chairman Denis Maslov. "We all respect his devotion to the team. The fans here could not imagine a Krylia team without him."

Nick Bidwell

Natural-born raider...Tsallagov nips in to take the ball from Aleksei Ionov of Dynamo Moscow

Out of favour...Serero is at odds with his national coach

Thulani SERERO

CLUB	Ajax (Hol)
COUNTRY	South Africa
POSITION	Midfielder
AGE	23 (11.04.90)
PREVIOUS CLUB	Ajax Cape Town
CAPS	12 (0 goals)
INTERNATIONAL DEBUT	v Kenya, February 2011
HONOURS	2012 Dutch League, 2013 Dutch League

Since setting up a nursery club in Cape Town in 1999, Dutch club Ajax's attempts to cherry-pick the ripest African fruit have proved something of a hit-or-miss operation. The failure of Stanton Lewis and Daylon Claasen to deliver has been counterbalanced by the successful integration of Steven Pienaar, Eyong Enoh and now Serero, the ball-playing midfielder who, after two injury-ravaged seasons, is finally coming good in Amsterdam.

South Africa's Player of the Year in 2011, the diminutive Soweto-born player boasts all the individual qualities one might expect of an Ajax gem. With plenty of technical dexterity, high-octane speed, lashings of imagination and unlimited confidence, he is known as "Magic Feet" in his homeland.

One of the key narratives in his rise to fame has been the need for coaches to be patient with him. Having joined Ajax Cape Town at the age of 14, he took a long time to settle in, and it was a similar scenario on decamping to Holland in the summer of 2011 as he was held back by recurrent physical problems and inconsistency.

"I always thought Thulani was an exceptional prospect," says former Ajax Cape Town, Heerenveen and Holland Under-21 coach Foppe De Haan. "With his outstanding skills and flair for quickly breaking into advanced positions, he can be a dominant force."

What a shame the youngster currently finds himself at daggers drawn with South Africa coach Gordon Igesund, who this autumn kicked him out of the national squad for allegedly refusing to play in a World Cup qualifier against Botswana. Igesund claims Serero's decision to down tools was motivated by the desire to save himself for an upcoming Champions League tie against Barcelona.

> "I regard Serero as the best player to come out of the Ajax development scene in recent years"
>
> Former Ajax Cape Town coach Foppe De Haan

Unsurprisingly, Serero denies the charge, but whatever the truth it's a messy affair he could have well done without.

Nick Bidwell

Martin HINTEREGGER

CLUB	Salzburg
COUNTRY	Austria
POSITION	Defender
AGE	21 (07.09.92)
HONOURS	2012 Austrian Bundesliga, 2012 Austrian Cup

A keen hunter in his spare time, the imposing Salzburg central defender is currently in role-reversal territory on the football pitch, tracked and trailed by a pack of some of Europe's most prestigious clubs.

But when this robust, athletic and vigilant left-footer eventually does head for the exit, he will depart with a heavy heart. He talks enthusiastically of his affection for a club that has been his second home since the age of 14. Yet a severe bout of homesickness during his first season at the academy almost made him give up until youth coach Henrik Pedersen managed to talk him round.

On stepping back from the edge of the cliff, Hinteregger went from strength to strength, overcoming every challenge presented to him en route to making his first-team debut in the spring of 2010. The first-ever Red Bull soccer school pupil to hitch a ride all the way to the professional ranks, he was initially a defensive gap-filler, never certain from week-to-week where he would be employed: left-back, midfield enforcer or in his favourite position of stopper.

> "There's enough examples of young players who've gone abroad, do not fit in and have ended up broken. I'll go when I'm older and more experienced"

Now firmly established in the side, he has a habit of going against the grain. Preferring club commitments to a trip to the Under-20 World Cup in 2011 did not make him popular with selectors, but he has since been forgiven and now has every chance of becoming part of the senior set-up.

Nick Bidwell

Strongman...Hinteregger has overcome homesickness to shine for Austria

Keir Radnedge

THE INSIDER

The expert view on events off the pitch

Delayed ambition

Sepp Blatter and Michel Platini shape up to battle for the FIFA presidency – but not just yet

Rivalry...but whether Platini (left) will stand against Blatter in 2015 will not be known until after the World Cup in Brazil

"Oh, the grand old Duke of York,
He had ten thousand men;
He marched them up to the top of the hill,
And he marched them down again.

And when they were up, they were up,
And when they were down, they were down,
And when they were only half-way up,
They were neither up nor down"

This English children's nursery rhyme sprung to mind after Michel Platini's latest tease on the issue of the FIFA presidency. Having announced he would make a statement during September's UEFA strategy meeting in Dubrovnik, he kept his word...but only to say he would make another statement some time after the World Cup in Brazil next year.

The media army following the Frenchman up the hill marched back down again to wait for the next deployment of journalistic forces.

Ever since Sepp Blatter told 2011 Congress in Zurich that this would be his last term in office, speculation has been growing over the election in 2015.

Blatter had made his retirement statement under heavy pressure as he sought a pathway through the mountains of scandal which had turned FIFA into a laughing stock and provoked votes against his presidency even though he was the only candidate left standing.

At that point only one tenable alternative candidate existed. This was Platini, who had made his presence felt at UEFA by expanding access to the Champions League and talking up what is now known as Financial Fairplay.

However Platini, having been brought into FIFA as Blatter's counsellor in 1998, had always insisted that "I will never run against Blatter".

Departure in doubt

Halfway through his fourth term, Blatter's willing departure from the presidency is now in doubt. He has talked of retiring only if his mission has been completed and only if there is a successor who represents continuity – just as he himself represented continuity when he graduated from chief executive to succeed Joao Havelange in 1998.

Both Blatter and Platini have sidestepped questions about their electoral ambitions in 2015. They have no need to declare early; after all, the deadline for nominations is not until January 2015, four months before the election congress.

This, however, makes it complicated for Platini, whose own UEFA Congress will be staged within the four months. If he stands for the FIFA presidency, can he also present himself, weeks later, to UEFA Congress as a candidate for re-election in the knowledge that he has ambitions elsewhere? Or should he stick with UEFA, which he may think presents more opportunity for lever-pulling behind the scenes than the out-front role of FIFA president?

Blatter can afford to wait. He has been in FIFA for 38 years as development officer, general-secretary, chief executive and now president. Potential mischief makers such as Mohamed Bin Hammam and Jack Warner are out of the way and, as Blatter has noted, the new generation of ExCo members are comparatively green behind the political ears.

Meanwhile the diplomatic grandstanding continues.

Ever since Platini first served up his idea of taking the group stage of the 2020 European Championship out and around the entire continent, Blatter – much to Platini's irritation, has been openly critical.

Subsequently, in the most recent congresses in CONCACAF, Africa and Asia, Blatter has talked of a need to provide these regions with greater access to the World Cup finals at the expense of Europe and South America.

> Can Platini present himself to UEFA Congress as a candidate for re-election in the knowledge that he has ambitions elsewhere?

This is standard Blatter. He has been tripping out that line as long as he has been president. It gains him local favour wherever he happens to be. It may provoke little puffs of angry smoke in Europe and South America, but Blatter probably gave up on Europe in vote terms long ago and, anyway, it represents only a quarter of the FIFA membership. Similarly, South America is only 10 members yet its ratio of World Cup places is a remarkable 50 per cent.

Platini has responded with the semi-serious idea of a 40-team World Cup. The Russians will not wear that for 2018, while Qatar is already considering a

cut-back on stadia provisions for 2022.

The other possible alternatives to Platini and Blatter are FIFA secretary-general Jerome Valcke and Spain's Angel Maria Villar.

Valcke's possible interest is easy to understand by considering what happens when a club changes manager: the new man brings in his own staff. So Valcke cannot be an uninterested spectator in how the election issue unfolds.

As for Villar, he boasts the status of a vice-president of both FIFA and UEFA, has led Spanish football for 25 years and his Latin American connections might

Alternative choices...Villar (left) and Valcke

stand him in good electoral stead.

On the other hand, his reluctance to speak publicly in English and his habit of scuttling for the door whenever the international media looms into view are hardly the qualities needed.

Nature of the presidency

One issue that remains outstanding is the very nature of the presidency. Havelange ran FIFA as a chairman of the board. He had his own office in Rio de Janeiro and strode into Zurich a handful of times a year when duty demanded it.

Blatter, by contrast, has maintained the executive presidency as a 24/7 job. This is unlikely to appeal to Platini. His *modus operandi* in Nyon has been to come up with the ideas and then rely on general secretary Gianni Infantino to fashion the mechanics.

A change of style at the top may appeal to some national associations. What remains uncertain is whether they will even have a choice. **WS**

● Read Keir Radnedge's exclusive online columns at worldsoccer.com

Brazil will get there... eventually

Brazil, it seems, will just about stagger across the December 31 deadline set by FIFA's World Cup progress-chaser Jerome Valcke to have all its World Cup stadia ready. A handful will be "delivered" – in the jargon – without all the furnishings. But that, in itself, will be a major accomplishment for a country in which being organised is a rare concept.

The latest, hilarious, example came with the lottery draw to sort out the lucky online applicants for tickets.

More than six million requests had been received, and winners and losers had been due to learn about their success or failure by November 4. That meant running the draw, in Manchester, in the middle of October.

However, the Brazilians could not decide in time who should be sent to represent the responsible bank and the sports ministry, and when they could get there. Hence the start of the draw had to be postponed until October 29, as FIFA pointedly put it, "to accommodate the involvement of the Brazilian authorities".

Hopefully someone in Brazil has pencilled June 12, 2014, into his or her diary...if they can find someone organised enough to attend the opening match.

Lottery...FIFA release details of the ticketing draw

Energy efficient...Argentina take on Tunisia in the Under-17 World Cup

Kids thrive in Gulf conditions

The Under-17 World Cup went ahead as planned in the United Arab Emirates, next door to Qatar, without players or fans shrivelling up into burned-out little shells in the heat. Kick-off times were 5pm and 8pm locally, and conditions never reached the complex point at which the referees had to be told to stop play for a water break. Indeed, the energy of the young players was impressive and significant.

One tip for federations pre-planning youth systems with Qatar 2022 in mind: out in the Gulf (whatever the date) putting your trust in youth could be a winning formula.

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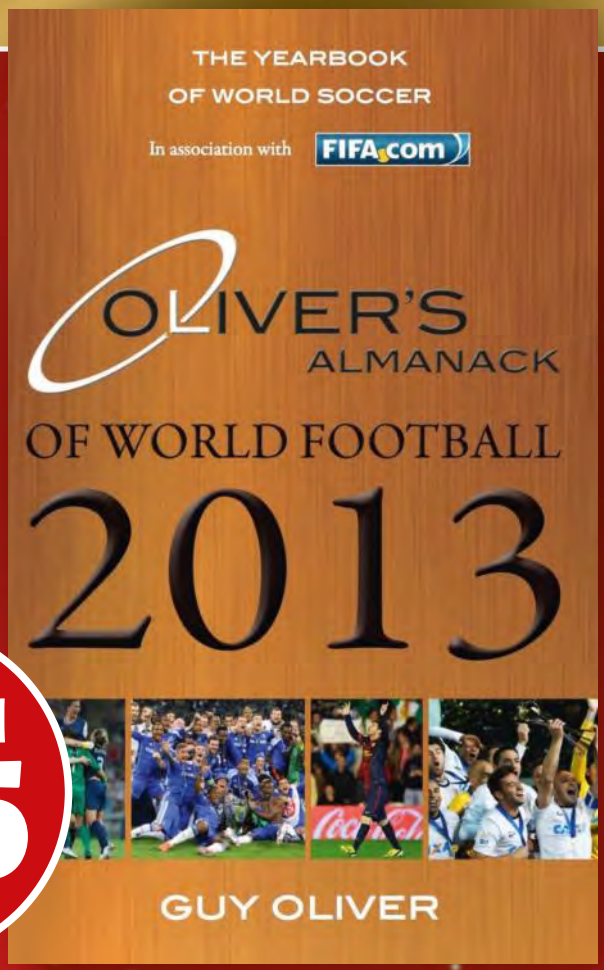

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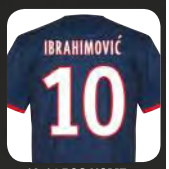

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World Service

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Bound for Brazil...Mario Yepes celebrates his goal against Paraguay as Colombia head for next summer's World Cup finals

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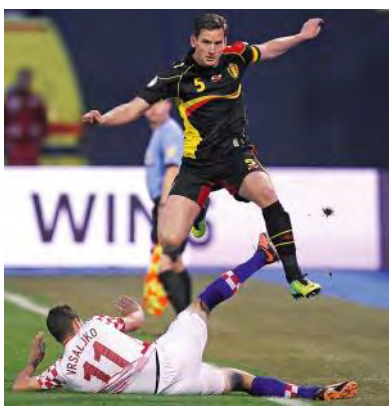


Going up...Belgium's Jan Vertonghen

World Service

ARGENTINA

Icardi makes his choice

Rosario-born Internazionale striker Mauro Icardi, who had also been eligible to represent Italy, made his international debut in the 3-2 World Cup qualifying defeat by Uruguay.

AUSTRALIA

Coaching shake-up

Assistant coach Aurelio Vidmar was put in charge temporarily for Australia's 3-0 friendly win against Canada – in which he handed debuts to Celtic central midfielder Jackson Irvine, who is on loan at Kilmarnock, and midfielder Oliver Bozanic of Lucerne in Switzerland.

Vidmar took over after the 6-0 friendly defeat to France – in which Borussia Dortmund goalkeeper Mitchell Langerak was making his debut.

40 number of teams that Michel Platini would like to see in the 2018 World Cup finals in Russia

On target...Rooney

ENGLAND

Rooney's records

Wayne Rooney scored in wins against Montenegro and Poland to become England's record scorer in both World Cup games (16 goals) and all competitive matches (28).

Tottenham Hotspur winger Andros Townsend scored against Montenegro on his debut.

Internationals

2014 WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

INTERCONTINENTAL PLAY-OFFS

Asia/South America

Jordan v Uruguay
1st leg - Nov 13; 2nd leg - Nov 20

CONCACAF/Oceania

Mexico v New Zealand
1st leg - Nov 13; 2nd leg - Nov 20

● The 2 winners will qualify for the finals

EUROPE SECTION

● 13 finals places available

Group A

Oct 11 - Zagreb
Croatia 1 (Kranjcar 83)
Belgium 2 (Lukaku 15, 38)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 13,000. **Ref:** Webb (Eng)
Croatia: Pletikosa - Strinic, Lovren, Corluka, Vida, Kovacic (Vukojevic 65), Vrsaljko, Rakitic (Kranjcar 76), Modric, Perisic (Kalinic 46), Mandzukic.
Belgium: Courtois - Alderweireld, Van Buyten, Lombaerts, Vertonghen, Witsel, Defour (Dembele 84), De Bruyne (Mirallas 65), Fellaini, E Hazard, Lukaku (Chadli 69).

Oct 11 - Cardiff
Wales 1 (Church 67)
Macedonia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 11,257. **Ref:** Baliyan (Arm)
Wales: Hennessey - N Taylor, Gunter, J Collins, John, Vaughan, King, Ramsey, Robson-Kanu, Bellamy, Church (Easter 90).
Macedonia: Pacovski - Alioski, Noveski, Sikov, Ristovski, Demiri (Kostovski 86), Randjelovic, Stjepanovic (Tasevski 75), Pandev, Ibraimi, M Ivanovski (Trajkovski 80).

Oct 15 - Brussels
Belgium 1 (De Bruyne 64)
Wales 1 (Ramsey 88)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 45,401. **Ref:** Karasev (Rus)
Belgium: Courtois - Alderweireld, Van Buyten (Vertonghen 73), Vermaelen, Pocognoli, Witsel, De Bruyne, Dembele, Chadli (E Hazard 58), Mirallas (Bakkali 78), Lukaku.
Wales: Hennessey - Richards, Gunter, J Collins (J Wilson 56), N Taylor, Ramsey, Vaughan, Robson-Kanu (H Wilson 87), King, Bellamy, Church (Vokes 70).

Oct 15 - Glasgow
Scotland 2 (Snodgrass 28, Naismith 73)
Croatia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 30,172. **Ref:** Hategan (Rom)
Scotland: McGregor - Hutton, Hanley, Martin, Mulgrew, Bannan (Burke 89), Brown, Morrison, Snodgrass (McArthur 82), Anya (Dorrans 77), Naismith.
Croatia: Pletikosa - Vida, Corluka, Lovren, Strinic, Kranjcar (Perisic 69), Vukojevic, Modric, Srna, Kalinic (Eduardo 59), Mandzukic (Jelavic 80).

Oct 15 - Jagodina
Serbia 5 (Ristovski og 16, Basta 19, Kolarov pen 38, Tadic 54, Scepovic 73)
Macedonia 1 (Jahovic 83)
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 8,294. **Ref:** Trutz (Slk)
Serbia: Stojkovic - Ivanovic, Kolarov, Nastasic, Rukavina (Trajkovic 83), Milivojevic (Petrovic 76), Matic, Basta, Tadic, Z Tosic, Djordjevic (Scepovic 62).
Macedonia: Pacovski - Noveski, Grncarov, Demiri (Babunski 56), Ristovski, Alioski, Stjepanovic, Randjelovic, Ibraimi (Trajkovski 46), M Ivanovski (Jahovic 81), Kostovski.

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP A – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
BELGIUM (F)	10	8	2	0	18	4	26
Croatia (QP)	10	5	2	3	12	9	17
Serbia	10	4	2	4	18	11	14
Scotland	10	3	2	5	8	12	11
Wales	10	3	1	6	9	20	10
Macedonia	10	2	1	7	7	16	7

Group B

Oct 11 - Yerevan
Armenia 2 (Ozbiliz 45+1, Movsisyan 87)
Bulgaria 1 (I Popov 61)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 11,000. **Ref:** Brych (Ger)
Armenia: Berezovsky - Hovhannisyan, Arzumanyan (V Aleksanyan 12), Mkoyan, Hayrapetyan, Ozbiliz (Pizzelli 54), Mkhitaryan, Sarkisov (Manoyan 90+4), Mkrtchyan, Ghazaryan, Movsisyan.
Bulgaria: V Stoyanov - Y Minev, I Ivanov, Bodurov, Zanev, Manolev (Tonev 59), Gadzhev, G Milanov (V Hristov 76), Dyakov, I Popov, Gargorov (Zlatinski 69). *Sent off: Bodurov 44min, Dyakov 63min.*

Oct 11 - Copenhagen
Denmark 2 (Bendtner 45+1, 79)
Italy 2 (Osvaldo 28, Aquilani 90+1)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 35,305. **Ref:** Lannoy (Fra)
Denmark: Andersen - Jakobsen, Bjelland, Agger, Boilesen, Kvist, Zimling (Andreasen 82), Braithwaite (Larsen 46), Eriksen, Krohn-Dehli, Bendtner (Makienok 84).
Italy: Buffon - De Silvestri, Ranocchia, Chiellini, Balzaretti, Thiago Motta, Candreva, Montolivo (Gilardino 80), Marchisio (Aquilani 68), Diamanti (Cerci 77), Osvaldo.

Oct 11 - Valletta
Malta 1 (M Mifsud 47)
Czech Republic 4 (Hubschman 3, Lafata 33, V Kadlec 51, Pekhart 90)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 4,530. **Ref:** Jug (Sln)
Malta: Haber - Camilleri (P Fenech 80), J Caruana (A Agius 57), Dimech, A Muscat, Mintoff, Briffa, R Muscat, Failla (R Fenech 87), Cohen, M Mifsud.
Czech Republic: Cech - Rajtoral, Sivok, Suchy, M Kadlec, Hubschman, Dockal, Husbauer, Plasil, V Kadlec (Pekhart 73; Vanek 90+3), Lafata (Jiracek 85).

Oct 15 - Sofia
Bulgaria 0
Czech Republic 1 (Dockal 52)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,464. **Ref:** Kassai (Hun)
Bulgaria: V Stoyanov - Y Minev, I Milanov, I Ivanov, Zanev, Manolev, Gargorov (Marquinhos 56), Gadzhev, G Milanov (Rangelov 46), I Popov, V Hristov (Slavchev 73). *Sent off: Zanev 75min.*
Czech Republic: Cech - M Kadlec, Mazuch, Suchy, Rajtoral, Plasil, Hubschman, Dockal (Vanek 84), Jiracek (Husbauer 90+1), Kozak, V Kadlec (Lafata 90).

Oct 15 - Copenhagen
Denmark 6 (Rasmussen 8, 74, Agger pen 11, pen 38, Bjelland 28, Nielsen 83)
Malta 0
HT: 4-0. **Att:** 11,479. **Ref:** Stavrev (Mac)
Denmark: Schmeichel - P Ankersen, Bjelland, Agger, Delaney, Sloth (Andreasen 65), Kvist, Eriksen (Kusk 53), Krohn-Dehli, Larsen, Rasmussen (Nielsen 75).
Malta: Haber - A Muscat, A Agius, Camilleri, Failla, R Muscat, Briffa, Mintoff, Schembri, Herrera (R Fenech 82), M Mifsud.

Oct 15 - Naples
Italy 2 (Florenzi 24, Balotelli 76)
Armenia 2 (Movsisyan 5, Mkhitaryan 70)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 22,000. **Ref:** Oliver (Eng)
Italy: Marchetti - Abate, Bonucci, Astori, Pasqual, Pirlo, Florenzi (Candreva 61), Aquilani (Rossi 74), Montolivo, Insigne, Osvaldo (Balotelli 54).
Armenia: Berezovsky - Mkoyan, Haroyan, Arzumanyan, Hayrapetyan (Hovhannisyan 63), Artur Edigaryan (Pizzelli 90), Mkrtchyan, Ozbiliz (Sarkisov 79), Mkhitaryan, Ghazaryan, Movsisyan.

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP B – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ITALY (F)	10	6	4	0	19	9	22
Denmark	10	4	4	2	17	12	16
Czech Rep	10	4	3	3	13	9	15
Bulgaria	10	3	4	3	14	9	13
Armenia	10	4	1	5	12	13	13
Malta	10	1	0	9	5	28	3

Group C

Oct 11 - Torshavn
Faroe Islands 1 (Hansson 41)
Kazakhstan 1 (Finonchenko 55)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 1,870. **Ref:** Muntean (Mol)
Faroe Islands: Nielsen - Naes, J Davidsen, Baldvinsson, V Davidsen, Udsen (S Olsen 77), Benjaminsen, P Justinussen, Holst, Hansson, Edmundsson (Klettskard 77).
Kazakhstan: Sidelnikov - Gorman, Kislitsyn, Engel, Korobkin, Muldarov (Logvinenko 80), Zhumaskaliyev (Baizhanov 71), Shomko, Bogdanov, Khizhnichenko, Finonchenko (Shchetkin 90+2).

Oct 11 - Cologne
Germany 3 (Khedira 12, Schurrle 58, Ozil 90+1)
Republic of Ireland 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 46,237. **Ref:** Gumienny (Blg)
Germany: Neuer - Lahm, Mertesacker, Boateng, Jansen, Khedira (Kruse 82), Schweinsteiger, T Muller (Sam 88), Kroos, Schurrle (Gotze 86), Ozil.
Rep Ireland: Forde - Coleman, Clark, Delaney, Kelly, Gibson, Wilson, Whelan, Doyle, McCarthy, Stokes.

Oct 11 - Stockholm
Sweden 2 (M Olsson 56, Ibrahimovic 86)
Austria 1 (Harnik 29)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 49,416. **Ref:** Cakir (Tur)
Sweden: Isaksson - Lustig (Durmaz 66), P Nilsson, Antonsson, M Olsson, S Larsson, A Svensson (Wernbloom 81), R Elm (Kallstrom 73), Kacaniklic, Elmander, Ibrahimovic.
Austria: Almer - Garics, Prodl, Pogatetz, Dragovic, Fuchs, Harnik (Weimann 74), Junuzovic (Leitgeb 64), Alaba, Arnautovic, Janko (Ivanschitz 80). *Sent off: Arnautovic 90min.*

Oct 15 - Torshavn
Faroe Islands 0
Austria 3 (Ivanschitz 17, Prodl 64, Alaba pen 67)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 3,100. **Ref:** Liani (Isr)
Faroe Islands: Nielsen - Naes, J Davidsen, Baldvinsson, V Davidsen, Holst (Mouritsen 71), Benjaminsen, P Justinussen, Hansson, S Olsen (Edmundsson 82), Klettskard (K Olsen 74).
Austria: Lindner - Dragovic, Pogatetz, Prodl (Ortlechner 81), Kavlak, Ivanschitz, Klein, Fuchs (Suttner 72), Alaba, Hosiner, Harnik (Sabitzer 71).

Oct 15 - Dublin
Republic of Ireland 3 (Keane pen 17, O'Shea 26, Shomko og 77)
Kazakhstan 1 (Shomko 13)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 21,700. **Ref:** Direktorenko (Lat)
Rep Ireland: Forde - Coleman, Dunne, O'Shea, Wilson, A Reid (McGeady 75), Gibson (Whelan 37), McCarthy, Doyle, Keane, Stokes (Hoolahan 87).
Kazakhstan: Sidelnikov - Engel, Gorman, Dmitrenko, Kislitsyn (Finonchenko 32), Korobkin, Karpovich (Shabalin 84), Shchetkin (Yurin 61), Baizhanov, Shomko, Khizhnichenko.

Oct 15 - Stockholm
Sweden 3 (Hysen 6, 69, Kacaniklic 42)
Germany 5 (Ozil 45, Gotze 53, Schurrle 57, 66, 76)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 49,251. **Ref:** Collum (Sco)
Sweden: Wiland - P Bengtsson, P Nilsson, Antonsson, M Olsson, R Elm (A Svensson 58), Kallstrom, S Larsson, Kacaniklic (Durmaz 73), Toivonen (Wernbloom 84), Hysen.
Germany: Neuer - Lahm, Boateng, Hummels, Jansen, Schweinsteiger, Kroos, T Muller (Gotze 46), Ozil (Draxler 82), Schurrle, Kruse (Howedes 75).

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP C – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
GERMANY (F)	10	9	1	0	36	10	28
Sweden (QP)	10	6	2	2	19	14	20
Austria	10	5	2	3	20	10	17
Rep Ireland	10	4	2	4	16	17	14
Kazakhstan	10	1	2	7	6	21	5
Faroe Islands	10	0	1	9	4	29	1

Group D

Oct 11 - Andorra La Vella
Andorra 0
Romania 4 (Keseru 43, Stancu 53, Torje pen 62, Lazar 85)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 1,100. **Ref:** Klossner (Swi)
Andorra: Pol - Rodrigues (Lorenzo 80), E Garcia, Vales (Sonejee 64), M Garcia, Ayala, M Vieira, C Martinez, Pujol (Peppe 47), Moreno, Riera.
Romania: Lobont - Matel, Goian, Chiriches, Latovlevici, Torje, Maxim (Tanase 69), Bourceanu, Lazar, Keseru (Marica 58), Stancu (Grozav 82).

GERMANY

Schweini's century

Bayern Munich midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger won his 100th cap in the 5-3 World Cup qualifying victory against Sweden.

Germany's 36 goals in 10 qualifiers was one less than the European record set by Romania in 1998.

Bundestrainer Joachim Low signed a two-year contract extension in October. The contracts of his assistants, Oliver Bierhoff and Andreas Kopke, were also extended.

Century maker...Schweinsteiger

GIBRALTAR

Wink makes history

George Wink scored Gibraltar's first-ever goal in a UEFA competition, putting his side ahead against the Republic of Ireland in a European Under-17 qualifier. He was also on target in the next game, against Armenia.

Joy...Kluivert (left) and RVP

HOLLAND

RVP eclipses Kluivert

Robin Van Persie's hat-trick against Hungary made him Holland's all-time leading scorer, beating the 40 goals of the national team's current assistant coach Patrick Kluivert.

Oct 11 - Tallinn
Estonia 0
Turkey 2 (Umut 22, Burak 47)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 8,572. **Ref:** Rizzoli (Ita)
Estonia: Pareiko - Kams (Kink 66), Piiroja (Reintam 34), Klavan, Teniste, Ojamaa (Puri 75), Vunk, Dmitrijev, Kruglov, Vassiljev, Zenjov.
Turkey: Volkan - Gokhan Gonul, Semih, Toprak, Caner, Mehmet Topal, Selcuk Inan, Arda (Olcan 87), Gokhan Tore (Alper 82), Burak (Olcay 79), Umut.

Oct 11 - Amsterdam
Holland 8 (Van Persie 16, 44, 53, Strootman 25, Lens 38, Devecseri og 65, Van der Vaart 86, Robben 90)
Hungary 1 (Dzsudzsak pen 47)
HT: 4-0. **Att:** 52,027. **Ref:** Atkinson (Eng)
Holland: Vorm - Janmaat, Bruma, Vlaar, Blind, Van der Vaart, N De Jong, Strootman (Fer 81), Robben, Van Persie (Kuyt 61), Lens.
Hungary: Bogdan - Guzmics, Vanczak, Kadar (Devecseri 46), Korcsmar, J Varga, Bode, Hajnal (Elek 46), Dzsudzsak, Koman, Nemeth (Nikolic 79).

Oct 15 - Budapest
Hungary 2 (Nikolic 52, Lima og 77)
Andorra 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,200. **Ref:** Stefanski (Pol)
Hungary: Kiraly - Vanczak, Liptak (Korcsmar 46), Meszaros, Devecseri (J Varga 46), Stieber, Elek, Koman, Dzsudzsak, Nikolic, Szalai (Nemeth 76).
Andorra: Pol - C Martinez, M Garcia, Sonejee, Lima, E Garcia, San Nicolas, Peppe (X Vieira 80), M Vieira, Lorenzo (Clemente 87), Riera (Moreira 63).

Oct 15 - Bucharest
Romania 2 (Marica pen 30, 81)
Estonia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 18,852. **Ref:** Strahonja (Cro)
Romania: Tatarusanu - Matel, Goian, Gardos, Rat, Marica, Bourceanu, Lazar (Hoban 79), Stancu (Grozav 46), Tanase, Bucur (Torje 57).
Estonia: Pareiko - Jaager, Reintam, Klavan, Teniste, Puri (Ojamaa 59), Vassiljev, Dmitrijev, Kink, Lindpere (Kruglov 75), Zenjov (Anier 46).

Oct 15 - Istanbul
Turkey 0
Holland 2 (Robben 8, Sneijder 47)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 41,814. **Ref:** Benquerenca (Por)
Turkey: Volkan - Gokhan Gonul, Semih, Toprak, Hasan Ali, Olcan (Gokhan Tore 56), Mehmet Topal, Selcuk Inan (Cenk 74), Arda, Umut, Burak (Olcay 56).
Holland: Cillessen - Janmaat, Vlaar, Martins Indi (Bruma 46), Blind, Fer, Clasie, Sneijder, Robben, Van Persie (Kuyt 46), Lens (Depay 89).

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP D – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
HOLLAND (F)	10	9	1	0	34	5	28
Romania (QP)	10	6	1	3	19	12	19
Hungary	10	5	2	3	21	20	17
Turkey	10	5	1	4	16	9	16
Estonia	10	2	1	7	6	20	7
Andorra	10	0	0	10	0	30	0

Group E

Oct 11 - Tirana
Albania 1 (Salihi pen 88)
Switzerland 2 (Shaqiri 48, Lang 78)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 14,000. **Ref:** Proenca (Por)
Albania: Berisha - Lila, Cana, Mavraj, Agolli, E Bulku, Gashi (Roshi 55), Kace, Abrashi (Hyka 64), Rama (Mehmeti 85), Salihi.
Switzerland: Benaglio - Lang, Schar, Von Bergen, Rodriguez, Shaqiri (Mehmedi 54), Behrami, Inler, Stocker (Fernandes 68), Xhaka, Seferovic (Dzemaili 89).

Oct 11 - Reykjavik
Iceland 2 (Sigthorsson 60, G Sigurdsson 76)
Cyprus 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 9,767. **Ref:** Vad (Hun)
Iceland: Halldorsson - B Saevarsson, Arnason, R Sigurdsson, A Skulason, B Bjarnason, A Gunnarsson (Danielsson 77), G Sigurdsson (R Gislason 82), J Gudmundsson, Gudjohnsen (Finnbogason 66), Sigthorsson.
Cyprus: Georgallides - A Charalambous, Mertakkas, Merkis, Vasiliou, Aloneftis, Demetriou, Laban, Charalambides (Efrem 67), Mitidis (Sotiriou 75), Alexandrou (Pavlou 84).

Oct 11 - Maribor
Slovenia 3 (Novakovic 13, 15, 49)
Norway 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 10,890. **Ref:** Velasco Carballo (Spa)
Slovenia: S Handanovic - Brecko, Ilic, Cesar, Struna, Mertelj, Kurtic, Pecnik (Ljubijankic 70), Kampl (Krhin 82), Kirm, Novakovic (Bezjak 90).
Norway: Jarstein - Elabdellaoui, Bjordal, Hangeland, Hogli, Skjelbred, Eikrem (Storflor 74), Johansen, Elyounoussi, Abdellaoue (Johnsen 81), Braaten (Kamara 60).

Oct 15 - Nicosia
Cyprus 0
Albania 0
Att: 341. **Ref:** Bebek (Cro)
Cyprus: Georgallides - Dossa Junior, A Charalambous, Mitidis (Pavlou 65), Sotiriou (Avraam 86), Alexandrou (Aloneftis 46), Demetriou, Vasiliou, Efrem, Laban, Nikolaou.
Albania: Berisha - Lila, Cana, Agolli, E Bulku (Abrashi 72), Hyka (Mehmeti 72), Mavraj, Salihi (Balaj 87), Kace, Rama, Roshi.

Oct 15 - Oslo
Norway 1 (Braaten 30)
Iceland 1 (Sigthorsson 12)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 6,796. **Ref:** Tagliavento (Ita)
Norway: Jarstein - Elabdellaoui, Reginiussen, Hangeland, Hogli, Skjelbred (Johnsen 86), Tettey, Johansen, Elyounoussi, Braaten (Abdellaoue 74), Kamara (Berisha 56).
Iceland: Halldorsson - B Saevarsson, Arnason, R Sigurdsson, A Skulason, J Gudmundsson (R Gislason 90), A Gunnarsson, G Sigurdsson, B Bjarnason, Gudjohnsen (Finnbogason 59), Sigthorsson.

Oct 15 - Berne
Switzerland 1 (Xhaka 72)
Slovenia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 22,014. **Ref:** Kuipers (Hol)
Switzerland: Sommer - Lang, Senderos, Djourou, Ziegler, Barnetta (Kasami 69), Dzemaili, Inler, Mehmedi (Fernandes 84), Xhaka, Seferovic (Derdiyok 69).
Slovenia: S Handanovic - Brecko, Ilic, Cesar, Struna, Pecnik (Matavz 41), Mertelj (Ljubijankic 76), Kurtic, Kirm, Kampl (Lazarevic 83), Novakovic.

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP E – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
SWITZ'LAND (F)	10	7	3	0	17	6	24
Iceland (QP)	10	5	2	3	17	15	17
Slovenia	10	5	0	5	14	11	15
Norway	10	3	3	4	10	13	12
Albania	10	3	2	5	9	11	11
Cyprus	10	1	2	7	4	15	5

Group F

Oct 11 - Baku
Azerbaijan 2 (Dadashov 58, Shukurov 90+5)
Northern Ireland 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,100. **Ref:** De Marco (Ita)
Azerbaijan: K Agayev - Shukurov, Ramaldanov, R F Sadygov, Allahverdiyev, Abdullayev (Ozkara 82), Garayev, Amirguliyev, Nadirov (J Huseynov 46), Aliyev, Dadashov (B Huseynov 90+3).
Northern Ireland: Carroll - Cathcart, J Evans, McAuley, Hodson (McGinn 66), Norwood, Davis, Brunt (McKay 73), Ferguson, Paterson, Ward (Grigg 84). *Sent off: J Evans 90+4min.*

Oct 11 - Luxembourg
Luxembourg 0
Russia 4 (Samedov 9, Fayzulin 39, Glushakov 45+2, Kerzhakov 73)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 5,354. **Ref:** Studer (Swi)
Luxembourg: Joubert - Laterza, Philipps, Jans, Janisch, Da Mota (Bastos 62), Gerson, Mutsch, Bensi, Luisi (Martino 76), Turpel (Payal 31).
Russia: Akinfeev - Kozlov, V Berezutsky, Granat, Kombarov (Schennikov 85), Shirokov, Samedov, Glushakov, Kokorin (Zhirkov 46; Bystrov 65), Fayzulin, Kerzhakov.

Oct 11 - Lisbon
Portugal 1 (Ricardo Costa 27)
Israel 1 (Ben Basat 85)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 48,317. **Ref:** Hagen (Nor)
Portugal: Rui Patricio - Ricardo Costa, Antunes, Pepe, Joao Moutinho, Ruben Micael (Josue 69), Andre Almeida, Nani, Miguel Veloso (Eder 86), Hugo Almeida (Nelson Oliveira 69), Cristiano Ronaldo.
Israel: Aouate - Tal Ben Haim (D), Tibi, Ben Harush, Meshumar, Yeini, Natcho, Radi (Refaelov 67), Zahavi (Damari 83), Ben Basat, Barda (Tal Ben Haim (F) 59).

Oct 15 - Baku
Azerbaijan 1 (Javadov 90)
Russia 1 (Shirokov 16)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 11,000. **Ref:** Mazic (Ser)
Azerbaijan: K Agayev - Shukurov, Levin, R F Sadygov, Allahverdiyev, Abishov, Aliyev, Medvedev, Ismayilov (Garayev 46), Dadashov (Javadov 83), Abdullayev (Amirguliyev 79). *Sent off: Medvedev 73min.*
Russia: Akinfeev - Kozlov, Ignashevich, V Berezutsky, Kombarov, Samedov (Mamaev 82), Shirokov, Glushakov, Fayzulin (Shatov 46), Kokorin, Kerzhakov.

Oct 15 - Tel Aviv
Israel 1 (Ben Basat 43)
Northern Ireland 1 (Davis 72)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 12,785. **Ref:** Duhamel (Fra)
Israel: Aouate - Meshumar, Tal Ben Haim (D) (Keinan 46), Tibi, Davidadza, Melikson, Natcho, Yeini, Refaelov (Shechter 79), Zahavi (Tal Ben Haim (F) 71), Ben Basat.
Northern Ireland: Carroll - Hodson, McArdle, Cathcart, D Lafferty (Ferguson 78), Davis, C Evans (Brunt 24), Clingan, Baird, McGinn (Ward 65), Paterson.

Oct 15 - Coimbra
Portugal 3 (Varela 30, Nani 36, Helder Postiga 79)
Luxembourg 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 18,955. **Ref:** Yildirim (Tur)
Portugal: Rui Patricio - Andre Almeida, Neto, Ricardo Costa (Sereno 59), Fabio Coentrao (Antunes 76), Nani, Joao Moutinho, Miguel Veloso (Hugo Almeida 58), Josue, Varela, Helder Postiga.
Luxembourg: Joubert - Laterza, Jans, Philipps, Janisch, Joachim, Da Mota (Martino 82), Mutsch, Gerson, Bensi (Luisi 46), Payal (Peters 61). *Sent off: Joachim 28min.*

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP F – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
RUSSIA (F)	10	7	1	2	20	5	22
Portugal (QP)	10	6	3	1	20	9	21
Israel	10	3	5	2	19	14	14
Azerbaijan	10	1	6	3	7	11	9
N Ireland	10	1	4	5	9	17	7
Luxembourg	10	1	3	6	7	26	6

Group G

Oct 11 - Zenica
Bosnia-Herzegovina 4 (Dzeko 27, 39, Misimovic 34, Ibisevic 38)
Liechtenstein 1 (N Hasler 61)
HT: 4-0. **Att:** 11,200. **Ref:** Liesveld (Hol)
Bosnia-Herzegovina: Begovic - Spahic, Bicakcic, Vrsajevic, Salihovic, Lulic (Kvrzic 62), Pjanic (Hajrovic 62), Medunjanin (Ibricic 62), Misimovic, Ibisevic, Dzeko.
Liechtenstein: Jehle - Oehri, Kaufmann, Martin Stocklasa, Quintans (Erne 57), Polverino, D Hasler (Eris 80), N Hasler, Gubser, A Christen, M Christen (Yildiz 64).

Oct 11 - Piraeus
Greece 1 (Skrtel og 44)
Slovakia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 21,067. **Ref:** Aytekin (Ger)
Greece: Karnezis - Torosidis, Holebas, Papastathopoulos, Manolas, Tziolis, Maniatis, Salpigidis (Karagounis 76), Christodoulopoulos (Ninis 57), Samaras, Mitroglou (Fetfatzidis 89).
Slovakia: Mucha - Pekarik, Skrtel, Durica, Hubocan, Pecovsky (Guede 63), Kucka, Sestak (Jakubko 63), Weiss, Stoch, Nemec (Duris 76). *Sent off: Skrtel 90min.*

Oct 11 - Vilnius
Lithuania 2 (Cernych 8, Mikoliunas 68)
Latvia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 2,900. **Ref:** Reinert (Far)
Lithuania: Arlauskis - Vaitkunas, Kijanskas, Zaliukas, Borovskij, Ivaskevicius, Mikoliunas (Sirgedas 76), Panka, Kalonas, Cernych (Valskis 72), Matulevicius (Razulis 58).
Latvia: Vanins - Bulvitis, Gorkss, Maksimenko, Gabovs (Kovalovs 72), Zjuzins, Laizans, Rakels (Lukjanovs 66), Fertovs, Sabala, Verpakovskis (Visnakovs 77).

Oct 15 - Piraeus
Greece 2 (Salpigidis 7, Karagounis 81)
Liechtenstein 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 18,676. **Ref:** Kovarik (CzR)
Greece: Karnezis - Vyntra, Katsouranis, Siovas, Holebas, Tziolis, Kone (Samaris 46), Karagounis, Salpigidis, Samaras (Christodoulopoulos 69), Mitroglou (Athanasiadis 85).
Liechtenstein: Jehle - Oehri, Kaufmann, Martin Stocklasa, Burgmeier, A Christen, Polverino, Wieser, N Hasler, D Hasler (Yildiz 90+1), M Christen (Erne 82).

Oct 15 - Riga
Latvia 2 (Sabala 47, Rode 90+1)
Slovakia 2 (Jakubko 9, Salata 16)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 3,813. **Ref:** Aranovskiy (Ukr)
Latvia: Kolinko - Kovalovs, Bulvitis, Gorkss, Maksimenko, Rode, Fertovs, Laizans (Zjuzins 53), Lazdins, Sabala, Visnakovs (Verpakovskis 85).
Slovakia: Kozacik - Pekarik, Salata, Durica, Svento, Kona, Kucka (Pecovsky 87), Sestak (Guede 61), Duris, Jendrisek, Jakubko (Bakos 56).

World Service

Born in the USA...Beitashour

HUNGARY

Heaviest-ever loss

The 8-1 World Cup defeat by Holland was the country's heaviest defeat in a senior international.

IRAN

American debutant

America-born defender Mehrdad Beitashour, who plays for San Jose Earthquakes in MLS, made his international debut in a 2–1 win over Thailand.

MACEDONIA

Youth boss in charge

Zoran Stratev, who is co-ordinator of the national youth teams, took charge of the senior side's final two World Cup qualifying defeats, away to Wales and Serbia.

New beginning...Mexico

MEXICO

Club's seven starters

Club America coach Miguel Herrera named seven of his club side in the starting line-up for his first game in charge of the national team. He also awarded first caps to Edwin Hernandez of Leon and Santos Laguna's Alonso Escoboza – who scored *El Tri*'s fourth goal in the 4-2 victory over Finland.

Oct 15 - Kaunas
Lithuania 0
Bosnia-Herzegovina 1 (Ibisevic 68)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 6,239. **Ref:** Zwayer (Ger)
Lithuania: Arlauskis - Vaitkunas, Kijanskas, Zaliukas, Borovskij, Vicius, Mikoliunas (Valskis 69), Panka, Kalonas, Cernych (Sirgedas 85), Matulevicius (Razulis 78).
Bosnia-Herzegovina: Begovic - Bicakcic, Spahic, Vrsajevic (Zahirovic 70), Lulic, Salihovic, Medunjanin, Pjanic, Misimovic, Ibisevic, Dzeko.

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP G – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
BOSNIA-H (F)	10	8	1	1	30	6	25
Greece (QP)	10	8	1	1	12	4	25
Slovakia	10	3	4	3	11	10	13
Lithuania	10	3	2	5	9	11	11
Latvia	10	2	2	6	10	20	8
Liechtenstein	10	0	2	8	4	25	2

Group H

Oct 11 - London
England 4 (Rooney 48, Boskovic og 62, Townsend 78, Sturridge pen 90+3)
Montenegro 1 (Damjanovic 71)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 83,807. **Ref:** Undiano Mallenco (Spa)
England: Hart - Walker, Cahill, Jagielka, Baines, Gerrard (Milner 87), Lampard (Carrick 65), Townsend (Wilshere 80), Rooney, Welbeck, Sturridge.
Montenegro: Poleksic - Pavicevic (Beciraj 57), Kecojevic, Savic, Jovanovic, Zverotic, Drincic, Boskovic, Volkov (Vukcevic 72), Damjanovic, Jovetic (Kasalica 81).

Oct 11 - Chisinau
Moldova 3 (Frunza 55, Sidorenco 59, 89)
San Marino 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 7,348. **Ref:** Villamayor Rozados (And)
Moldova: Cebanu - Bordian, Golovatenco, Armas, Gatcan (Cojocari 85), Ionita, Sidorenco, G Andronic (Suvorov 68), Doros (Antoniuc 46), Dedov, Frunza.
San Marino: A Simoncini - F Vitaioli, D Simoncini, Alessandro Della Valle, Palazzi, C Valentini (L Gasperoni 79), Cervellini, Berretti (Battistini 64), A Gasperoni, Cibelli, Rinaldi (Bianchi 82).

Oct 11 - Kharkiv
Ukraine 1 (Yarmolenko 64)
Poland 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 39,136. **Ref:** Eriksson (Swe)
Ukraine: Pyatov - Fedetskyi, Khacheridi, Rakitskyi, Shevchuk, Stepanenko, Rotan, Edmar (Bezus 90+2), Yarmolenko (Husiev 90), Konoplyanka, Zozulya (Devych 61).
Poland: Boruc - Jedrzejczyk, Szukala, Glik, Wojtkowiak, Blaszczykowski, Krychowiak, Klich (Mierzejewski 66), M Lewandowski (Zielinski 75), Sobota (Peszko 61), R Lewandowski.

Oct 15 - London
England 2 (Rooney 41, Gerrard 88)
Poland 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 85,186. **Ref:** Skomina (Sln)
England: Hart - Smalling, Cahill, Jagielka, Baines, Gerrard, Carrick (Lampard 71), Townsend (Milner 86), Rooney, Welbeck, Sturridge (Wilshere 82).
Poland: Szczesny - Wojtkowiak, Jedrzejczyk, Glik, Celeban, Blaszczykowski, Mierzejewski (Zielinski 75), Krychowiak, Sobota (Peszko 65), M Lewandowski (Klich 46), R Lewandowski.

Oct 15 - Podgorica
Montenegro 2 (Jovetic pen 55, 90+1)
Moldova 5 (Antoniuc 28, 89, Armas 62, Sidorenco 64, Ionita 74)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 5,770. **Ref:** Schorgenhofer (Aut)
Montenegro: Poleksic - Pavicevic, V Bozovic, Kecojevic, Jovanovic (Krkotic 4), Zverotic, Drincic, Boskovic (Kasalica 46), Beciraj (Vesovic 77), Jovetic, Damjanovic.
Moldova: Cebanu - Bordian, Racu, Armas, Golovatenco, Gatcan, Ionita, Antoniuc, Gheorghiev, Dedov, Sidorenco (Frunza 84).

Oct 15 - Serravalle
San Marino 0
Ukraine 8 (Seleznyov pen 13, 19, Devych 15, 51, pen 58, Yarmolenko 55, Bezus 66, Mandzyuk 90)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 1,268. **Ref:** Lechner (Aut)
San Marino: A Simoncini - F Vitaioli (Genghini 84), Alessandro Della Valle, D Simoncini, Palazzi, C Valentini (Benedettini 74), Battistini, Berretti (Alex Della Valle 60), Cervellini, M Vitaioli, Rinaldi. *Sent off: Palazzi 56min, Alessandro Della Valle 90min.*
Ukraine: Pyatov - Mandzyuk, Kucher, Shevchuk, Yarmolenko (Fedetskyi 66), Rotan, Tymoshchuk, Husiev, Konoplyanka (Morozyuk 77), Devych, Seleznyov (Bezus 64).

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP H – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ENGLAND (F)	10	6	4	0	31	4	22
Ukraine (QP)	10	6	3	1	28	4	21
Montenegro	10	4	3	3	18	17	15
Poland	10	3	4	3	18	12	13
Moldova	10	3	2	5	12	17	11
San Marino	10	0	0	10	1	54	0

Group I

Oct 11 - Palma de Mallorca
Spain 2 (Xavi 60, Negredo 77)
Belarus 1 (Kornilenko 88)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 22,900. **Ref:** Nijhuis (Hol)
Spain: Valdes - Arbeloa, Pique, Sergio Ramos, Monreal (Iniesta 46), Busquets, Silva, Xavi, Fabregas (Koke 83), Pedro, Michu (Negredo 56).
Belarus: Gutor - Balanovich, Martynovich (Kislyak 79), Filipenko, Verkhovtsov, Bordachev, Kalachev, Tigorev, Dragun, Putsilo (Kornilenko 77), Rodionov (Krivets 55).

Oct 15 - Paris
France 3 (Ribery 8, Toivio og 76, Benzema 87)
Finland 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 70,156. **Ref:** Koukoulakis (Gre)
France: Lloris - Debuchy, Koscielny, Abidal, Evra, Pogba, Matuidi (Cabaye 70), Nasri (Remy 70), Valbuena, Ribery, Giroud (Benzema 81).
Finland: Maenpaa - Arkivuo, Pasanen, Halsti, Lampi, Tainio (Toivio 64), R Eremenko, P Hetemaj, Hamalainen (Riski 79), Ring, Pukki (Furuholm 86).

Oct 15 - Albacete
Spain 2 (Negredo 25, Mata 60)
Georgia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 16,133. **Ref:** Meyer (Ger)
Spain: Casillas - Juanfran, Pique, Sergio Ramos, Moreno, Xavi (Koke 65), Busquets, Iniesta (Isco 79), Jesus Navas, Negredo, Pedro (Mata 57).
Georgia: Loria - Lobjanidze, Khubutia, Kashia, Khidesheli, Kvirkvelia, S Grigalashvili (Ebralidze 69), Kobakhidze, E Grigalashvili (Khmaladze 74), Dzaria, Gelashvili (Modebadze 87).

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP I – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
SPAIN (F)	8	6	2	0	14	3	20
France (QP)	8	5	2	1	15	6	17
Finland	8	2	3	3	5	9	9
Georgia	8	1	2	5	3	10	5
Belarus	8	1	1	6	7	16	4

● The 9 group winners have qualified for the finals
● The 8 runners-up with the best record[1] (see table below) qualified for the play-offs

WC QUALS: EUROPE – RUNNERS-UP TABLE – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Greece (QP)	8	6	1	1	9	4	19
France (QP)	8	5	2	1	15	6	17
Portugal (QP)	8	4	3	1	15	8	15
Ukraine (QP)	8	4	3	1	11	4	15
Sweden (QP)	8	4	2	2	15	13	14
Iceland (QP)	8	4	2	2	15	14	14
Romania (QP)	8	4	1	3	11	12	13
Croatia (QP)	8	3	2	3	9	8	11
Denmark	8	2	4	2	9	11	10

[1] *Determined by results in the games against the teams finishing 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th in the respective groups*

Europe section play-offs

Draw

Greece v Romania
Iceland v Croatia
Portugal v Sweden
Ukraine v France
1st legs - Nov 15; 2nd legs - Nov 19

● The 4 winners will qualify for the finals

SOUTH AMERICA SECTION

● 5.5 finals places available, one of which goes automatically to hosts Brazil

(single, round-robin group)

Oct 11 - Buenos Aires
Argentina 3 (Lavezzi 23, 35, Palacio 47)
Peru 1 (Pizarro 21)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 28,977. **Ref:** Vera (Ecu)
Argentina: Romero - Zabaleta, F Fernandez, Garay, Rojo, Banega, Biglia, Di Maria (Somoza 90+1), Palacio (Lamela 81), Aguero, Lavezzi (Maxi Rodriguez 87).
Peru: Penny - Duarte, Gambetta, Gomez (Benavente 46), Aparicio, Ballon, Ramirez (Reyna 84), Hurtado, Vargas, Pizarro, Carrillo (Vilchez 69).

Oct 11 - Barranquilla
Colombia 3 (Gutierrez 69, Falcao pen 75, pen 84)
Chile 3 (Vidal pen 19, Sanchez 22, 29)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 40,388. **Ref:** De Oliveira (Bra)
Colombia: Ospina - Yepes, L Perea, Medina (Guarin 46), Aguilar (Torres 46), Sanchez (Bacca 67), Armero, Cuadrado, Rodriguez, Falcao, Gutierrez.
Chile: Bravo - M Gonzalez, Jara, Isla (Rojas 53), Mena, Valdivia (Beausejour 61), Vidal, Medel, Carmona, Sanchez, Vargas (Silva 69). *Sent off: Carmona 66min.*

Oct 11 - Quito
Ecuador 1 (Montero 30)
Uruguay 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 32,996. **Ref:** Ricci (Bra)
Ecuador: Dominguez - Paredes, Guagua, Erazo, W Ayovi, Castillo, Noboa, A Valencia, Montero (Ibarra 82), F Caicedo, E Valencia (Rojas 71; A Bolanos 88).
Uruguay: Muslera - Lugano, Godin, Gimenez, M Pereira (Forlan 65), Arevalo, Gargano (A Silva 72), C Rodriguez (Ramirez 78), Fucile, Suarez, Cavani.

Oct 11 - San Cristobal
Venezuela 1 (Seijas 82)
Paraguay 1 (E Benitez 28)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 27,227. **Ref:** Carrillo (Per)
Venezuela: D Hernandez - Amorebieta, Vizcarrondo, Rosales, A Gonzalez (Seijas 77), Arango, Lucena, Orozco, Otero (Aristeguieta 64), Fedor, Martinez (Pena 71).
Paraguay: Villar - Da Silva, Bonet, Gomez, Alonso, V Caceres, Ayala, Mino (Rojas 86), Santa Cruz, O Cardozo (Oviedo 66), E Benitez (O Romero 57).

Oct 15 - Santiago
Chile 2 (Sanchez 35, Medel 38)
Ecuador 1 (F Caicedo 66)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 47,458. **Ref:** Vuaden (Bra)
Chile: Bravo - M Gonzalez, Isla, Mena, Valdivia (Pinilla 89), Vidal, Diaz, Medel, Aranguiz (M Fernandez 76), Sanchez, Vargas (Beausejour 86).
Ecuador: Dominguez - Guagua, Erazo, Castillo, A Valencia, Noboa, W Ayovi, Paredes, E Valencia (J Ayovi 72), F Caicedo (Ibarra 89), Montero (Martinez 84).

Oct 15 - Asuncion
Paraguay 1 (Rojas 8)
Colombia 2 (Yepes 38, 57)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 7,142. **Ref:** Abal (Arg)
Paraguay: Villar - Da Silva, Candia, Bonet (O Cardozo 46), Gomez, Aquino, Oviedo, O Romero (Mendieta 77), Rojas, Santa Cruz, Jose Nunez (Sanabria 62).
Colombia: Ospina - Yepes, C Zapata, S Arias, Torres (A Ramirez 37), Sanchez, Armero, Guarin, Rodriguez (Mejia 90), J Martinez, Bacca (J Quintero 66). *Sent off: Guarin 32min.*

Oct 15 - Lima
Peru 1 (Yotun 19)
Bolivia 1 (Diego Bejarano 45+1)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Caceres (Par)
Match played behind closed doors
Peru: Penny - Duarte, Zambrano, Ballon, Lobaton, Yotun, Vargas, Advincula, Benavente (Reyna 46), Pizarro, Avila (Carrillo 60).
Bolivia: Quinonez - Raldes, Zenteno, L Gutierrez, M Bejarano, Chavez, Diego Bejarano (Rodriguez 86), Danny Bejarano (Arce 46), Martins, Rojas (Arrascaita 74), Veizaga.

Oct 15 - Montevideo
Uruguay 3 (C Rodriguez 6, Suarez pen 34, Cavani 49)
Argentina 2 (Maxi Rodriguez 15, 41)
HT: 2-2. **Att:** 55,000. **Ref:** De Lima Henrique (Bra)
Uruguay: Muslera - M Pereira, Lugano, Godin, Fucile, Arevalo, Perez (Ramirez 46), C Rodriguez, Stuani (Gimenez 90), Suarez, Cavani.
Argentina: Romero - Campagnaro, F Fernandez, Dominguez, Basanta, A Fernandez (Icardi 82), Banega (Somoza 68), Biglia, Maxi Rodriguez, Lamela (Sosa 76), Palacio.

MOROCCO

Positive dope test

Raja Casablanca's Hamza Abourazzouk has been suspended for six months following an anti-doping rule violation.

The 27-year-old midfielder tested positive for a prohibited substance after Morocco's 2-1 World Cup qualifying victory over Tanzania in June.

Suspended...Abourazzouk

NORTH KOREA

Gold medal winners

The country's under-23 side took gold at the East Asian Games in China, winning three of their four games.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Interim appointment

Under-21 coach Noel King took over as interim boss of the senior side for the games against Germany and Kazakhstan, following the departure of national boss Giovanni Trapattoni.

Everton midfielder Darron Gibson, who went into a self-imposed exile after Trapattoni left him out of the Euro 2012 finals campaign, returned for the 3-0 loss in Germany, but damaged cruciate ligaments in his right knee and will be out for nine months.

Caretaker boss...King

WC QUALS: SOUTH AMERICA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ARGENTINA (F)	16	9	5	2	35	15	32
COLOMBIA (F)	16	9	3	4	27	13	30
CHILE (F)	16	9	1	6	29	25	28
ECUADOR (F)	16	7	4	5	20	16	25
Uruguay (QP)	16	7	4	5	25	25	25
Venezuela	16	5	5	6	14	20	20
Peru	16	4	3	9	17	26	15
Bolivia	16	2	6	8	17	30	12
Paraguay	16	3	3	10	17	31	12

● The top 4 have qualified for the finals
● As the 5th-placed team, Uruguay will meet Asia section play-off winners Jordan in the intercontinental play-offs (see start of World Cup qualifying section) for a place in the finals

CONCACAF SECTION

● 3.5 finals places available

1st round

Anguilla v Dominican Republic 0-2, 0-4 (agg 0-6)
Aruba v St Lucia 4-2, 2-4
(agg 6-6, St Lucia 5-4 on pens)
Montserrat v Belize 2-5, 1-3 (agg 3-8)
Turks & Caicos Is v Bahamas 0-4, 0-6 (agg 0-10)
US Virgin Is v British Virgin Is 2-0, 2-1 (agg 4-1)

2nd round

Group A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
El Salvador (Q)	6	6	0	0	20	5	18
Dominican Rep	6	2	2	2	12	8	8
Surinam	6	2	1	3	5	11	7
Cayman Is	6	0	1	5	2	15	1

Group B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guyana (Q)	6	4	1	1	9	6	13
Trinidad & Tob	6	4	0	2	12	4	12
Bermuda	6	3	1	2	8	7	10
Barbados	6	0	0	6	2	14	0

Group C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Panama (Q)	4	4	0	0	15	2	12
Nicaragua	4	2	0	2	5	7	6
Dominica	4	0	0	4	0	11	0

Bahamas withdrew before start of 2nd round

Group D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Canada (Q)	6	4	2	0	18	1	14
Puerto Rico	6	2	3	1	8	4	9
St Kitts & N'vis	6	1	4	1	6	8	7
St Lucia	6	0	1	5	4	23	1

Group E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guatemala (Q)	6	6	0	0	19	3	18
Belize	6	2	1	3	9	10	7
St Vincent & G	6	1	2	3	4	12	5
Grenada	6	1	1	4	7	14	4

Group F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Antigua & B (Q)	6	5	0	1	28	5	15
Haiti	6	4	1	1	21	6	13
Curacao	6	2	1	3	15	15	7
US Virgin Is	6	0	0	6	2	40	0

3rd round

Group A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
USA (Q)	6	4	1	1	11	6	13
Jamaica (Q)	6	3	1	2	9	6	10
Guatemala	6	3	1	2	9	8	10
Antigua & B'da	6	0	1	5	4	13	1

Group B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mexico (Q)	6	6	0	0	15	2	18
Costa Rica (Q)	6	3	1	2	14	5	10
El Salvador	6	1	2	3	8	11	5
Guyana	6	0	1	5	5	24	1

Group C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Honduras (Q)	6	3	2	1	12	3	11
Panama (Q)	6	3	2	1	6	2	11
Canada	6	3	1	2	6	10	10
Cuba	6	0	1	5	1	10	1

4th round

(single, round-robin group)

Oct 11 - San Pedro Sula
Honduras 1 (Bengtson 65)
Costa Rica 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 37,325. **Ref:** Marrufo (USA)
Honduras: Valladares - Figueroa, Izaguirre (J Garcia 79), Bernardez, O Garcia, W Palacios (Najar 58), Espinoza, Garrido, A Peralta, Costly, Bengtson (Claros 74).
Costa Rica: Navas - Umana, Diaz, Gamboa, G Gonzalez, Acosta, Borges, Bolanos (Calvo 70), Cubero, B Ruiz (Campbell 61), Saborio (V Nunez 70).

Oct 11 - Mexico City
Mexico 2 (Peralta 40, R Jimenez 85)
Panama 1 (Tejada 81)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 90,758. **Ref:** Aguilar (ESv)
Mexico: G Ochoa - Marquez, Ayala, Torres Nilo, Layun, Zavala (R Jimenez 83), Aquino (Gimenez 65), Pena, Peralta, G Dos Santos (Arce 76), J Hernandez.
Panama: Penedo - Baloy, L Henriquez, R Torres, Cummings, G Gomez (Tejada 68), A Henriquez, Quintero, Sanchez (Jimenez 75), Godoy, B Perez (G Torres 79).

Oct 11 - Kansas City
United States 2 (Zusi 77, Altidore 81)
Jamaica 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 18,467. **Ref:** Bonilla (ESv)
United States: Howard - Evans, Cameron, Besler, Beasley (Castillo 66), Bedoya, Diskerud, Jones, Donovan (Zusi 46), Johannsson (Kljestan 72), Altidore.
Jamaica: Kerr - Phillips, Mariappa, Morgan, Doyley, Mattocks, Austin, Watson (Robinson 73), Brown, McAnuff, R Johnson (Anderson 85).

Oct 15 - San Jose
Costa Rica 2 (B Ruiz 25, Saborio 64)
Mexico 1 (Peralta 29)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Lopez (Gtm)
Costa Rica: Navas - Umana, Oviedo, Gamboa, G Gonzalez, Acosta, Borges, Bolanos, Tejeda (Cubero 72), B Ruiz (Saborio 49), Campbell (Barrantes 77).
Mexico: G Ochoa - Marquez, Ayala, Torres Nilo (Brizuela 73), Layun, Gimenez, Zavala, Aquino (G Dos Santos 66), Pena, Peralta, J Hernandez (R Jimenez 60).

Oct 15 - Kingston
Jamaica 2 (Claros og 3, Austin pen 59)
Honduras 2 (Costly 2, Figueroa 33)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Geiger (USA)
Jamaica: Kerr - Doyley (Powell 59), Mariappa, Phillips, Morgan, McAnuff, Austin, Watson, Anderson, Brown (R Johnson 77), Mattocks (Robinson 62).
Honduras: Valladares - Figueroa, Izaguirre, Bernardez, Beckeles, O Garcia, Claros, Espinoza (A Peralta 89), Garrido, Najar (W Palacios 64), Costly (Bengtson 86).

Oct 15 - Panama City
Panama 2 (G Torres 18, Tejada 83)
United States 3 (Orozco 64, Zusi 90+2, Johannsson 90+3)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 18,254. **Ref:** Campbell (Jam)
Panama: Penedo - C Rodriguez (Jimenez 72), R Torres, Baloy, L Henriquez, G Gomez (Chen 72), A Henriquez, Sanchez (Tejada 78), Quintero, B Perez, G Torres. *Sent off: Tejada 90+4min.*
United States: Guzan - Evans (Davis 56), Goodson, Orozco, Castillo, Bedoya, Beckerman, Kljestan, Diskerud (Johannsson 62), Zusi, Altidore (Boyd 76).

WC QUALS: CONCACAF – 4TH ROUND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
USA (F)	10	7	1	2	15	8	22
COSTA RICA (F)	10	5	3	2	13	7	18
HONDURAS (F)	10	4	3	3	13	12	15
Mexico (QP)	10	2	5	3	7	9	11
Panama	10	1	5	4	10	14	8
Jamaica	10	0	5	5	5	13	5

● The top 3 have qualified for the finals
● As the 4th-placed team, Mexico will meet Oceania section winners New Zealand in the intercontinental play-offs (see start of World Cup qualifying section) for a place in the finals

AFRICA SECTION

● 5 finals places available

1st round

Chad v Tanzania 1-2, 1-0
(agg 2-2, Tanzania on away goals)
Comoros v Mozambique 0-1, 1-4 (agg 1-5)
Djibouti v Namibia 0-4, 0-4 (agg 0-8)
Equatorial Guinea v Madagascar 2-0, 1-2 (agg 3-2)
Eritrea v Rwanda 1-1, 1-3 (agg 2-4)
Guinea-Bissau v Togo 1-1, 0-1 (agg 1-2)
Lesotho v Burundi 1-0, 2-2 (agg 3-2)
Mauritius v Liberia
Mauritius withdrew; Liberia given bye to 2nd rnd
Sao Tome e Principe v Congo 0-5, 1-1 (agg 1-6)
Seychelles v Kenya 0-3, 0-4 (agg 0-7)
Somalia v Ethiopia 0-0, 0-5 (agg 0-5)
Swaziland v DR Congo 1-3, 1-5 (agg 2-8)

2nd round

Group A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ethiopia (Q)	6	4	1	1	8	6	13
South Africa	6	3	2	1	12	5	11
Botswana	6	2	1	3	8	10	7
Cent Af Rep	6	1	0	5	5	12	3

Group B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tunisia (Q)	6	4	2	0	13	6	14
Cape Verde	6	3	0	3	9	7	9
Sierra Leone	6	2	2	2	10	10	8
Eq Guinea	6	0	2	4	6	15	2

Group C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ivory Coast (Q)	6	4	2	0	15	5	14
Morocco	6	2	3	1	9	8	9
Tanzania	6	2	0	4	8	12	6
Gambia	6	1	1	4	4	11	4

Group D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ghana (Q)	6	5	0	1	18	3	15
Zambia	6	3	2	1	11	4	11
Lesotho	6	1	2	3	4	15	5
Sudan	6	0	2	4	3	14	2

Group E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Burkina F (Q)	6	4	0	2	7	4	12
Congo	6	3	2	1	7	3	11
Gabon	6	2	1	3	5	6	7
Niger	6	1	1	4	6	12	4

Group F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nigeria (Q)	6	3	3	0	7	3	12
Malawi	6	1	4	1	4	5	7
Kenya	6	1	3	2	4	5	6
Namibia	6	1	2	3	2	4	5

Group G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Egypt (Q)	6	6	0	0	16	7	18
Guinea	6	3	1	2	12	8	10
Mozambique	6	0	3	3	2	10	3
Zimbabwe	6	0	2	4	4	9	2

Group H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Algeria (Q)	6	5	0	1	13	4	15
Mali	6	2	2	2	7	7	8
Benin	6	2	2	2	8	9	8
Rwanda	6	0	2	4	3	11	2

Group I

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cameroon (Q)	6	4	1	1	8	3	13
Libya	6	2	3	1	5	3	9
DR Congo	6	1	3	2	3	3	6
Togo	6	1	1	4	4	11	4

Group J

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Senegal (Q)	6	3	3	0	9	4	12
Uganda	6	2	2	2	5	6	8
Angola[1]	6	1	4	1	7	5	7
Liberia[1]	6	1	1	4	3	9	4

[1]The game between Angola and Liberia on Sep 7, originally a 4-1 win to Angola, has been awarded as a 3-0 win to Angola because Liberia fielded an ineligible player

SAUDI ARABIA

Cup of Nations' hosts

The Gulf Cup of Nations has been moved from Basra in Iraq to the Saudi city of Jeddah, due to the continuing ban on Iraq's hosting of international matches. The tournament, which was due to take place in December, will feature Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Yemen, as well as the hosts. Iraq withdrew from the competition in protest.

Family guy...Stankovic

SERBIA

Record-breaking exit

Dejan Stankovic retired as a player after the 2-0 friendly victory against Japan in which he broke Savo Milosevic's national record of 102 caps. While the 35-year-old was making his last appearance, 17-year-old Partizan midfielder Andrija Zivkovic became the country's youngest-ever international.

Debut...Michu

SPAIN

Michu makes his mark

Swansea City forward Michu made his international debut in the 2-1 win against Belarus, while Sevilla left-back Alberto Moreno made

3rd round

(the 10 qualifiers were drawn in 5 head-to-head, 2-leg ties)

1st legs

Oct 12 - Ouagadougou
Burkina Faso 3 (Pitroipa 45+2, D Kone 65, Bance pen 86)
Algeria 2 (Feghouli 50, Medjani 69)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 31,000. **Ref:** Sikazwe (Zam)
Burkina Faso: Diakite - B Kone (Yago 8), Koulibaly, Lingani (Panandetiguiri 68), Kabore, Koffi (B Traore 77), D Kone, Bance, Pitroipa, Nakoulma, Zongo.
Algeria: M'Bolhi - Mostefa, Belkalem, Bougherra, Mesbah, Yebda (Guedioura 67), Medjani, Taider (Lacen 82), Feghouli (Kadir 90+3), Slimani, Soudani.

Oct 12 - Abidjan
Ivory Coast 3 (Drogba pen 5, L Sane og 14, Kalou 49)
Senegal 1 (P D Cisse 90+5)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Seechurn (Mrs)
Ivory Coast: Barry - Boka, Bamba, Aurier, Zokora, Y Toure, Tiote, Die, Drogba (L Traore 77), Kalou (Sio 55), Gervinho (Gradel 89).
Senegal: Coundoul - Gassama (Cissokho 51), Kouyate, L Sane, Souare, A Ndiaye (S Mane 46), Diame, Gueye, Sow (Saivet 79), D Ndoye, P D Cisse.

Oct 13 - Addis Ababa
Ethiopia 1 (Behailu 56)
Nigeria 2 (Emenike 67, pen 90)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 22,000. **Ref:** Alioum (Cam)
Ethiopia: Jemal - Abebaw, Aynalem, Degu, Seyoum, Adane (Omod 64), Minyahile, Asrat, Behailu, Saladin, Shemeles (Addis 74).
Nigeria: Enyeama - Echiejile, Ambrose, Oboabona, Egwuekwe, Mikel, Moses (Ideye 67), Onazi, Emenike (Okwuosa 90+4), Musa, Oduamadi (Igiebor 65).

Oct 13 - Rades
Tunisia 0
Cameroon 0
Att: 30,900. **Ref:** Coulibaly (Mli)
Tunisia: Ben Cherifia - Yahia, Mikari, Derbali, S Ben Youssef, Chikhaoui (Ben Hatira 83), Ragued, Ben Yahia, Allagui (F Ben Youssef 46), Chermiti (Jemaa 75), Khelifa.
Cameroon: Itandje - Chedjou, N'Koulou, Nyom (Kana-Biyik 69), Nounkeu, Matip, Makoun (Idrissou 77), Song, Enoh, Eto'o (Choupo-Moting 90), Webo.

Oct 15 - Kumasi
Ghana 6 (Gyan 4, 54, Gomaa og 22, Waris 44, Muntari pen 73, Atsu 89)
Egypt 1 (Aboutraika pen 41)
HT: 3-1. **Att:** 38,000. **Ref:** El Ahrach (Mor)
Ghana: Dauda - Akaminko, Inkoom, Opare, Sumaila, Essien, Muntari (Agyemang-Badu 83), K Asamoah, Gyan (Wakaso 79), A Ayew (Atsu 83), Waris.
Egypt: Ekramy (El Shenawy 57) - Fathy, Gomaa, Shedid (Shikabala 46), Naguib, Ghaly, Ashour (Elmohamady 40), Soliman, Aboutraika, M Salah, El Nenny.

2nd legs - Nov 16-19

● The 5 winners will qualify for the finals

ASIA SECTION

● 4.5 finals places available

1st round

Afghanistan v Palestine 0-2, 1-1 (agg 1-3)
Bangladesh v Pakistan 3-0, 0-0 (agg 3-0)
Cambodia v Laos 4-2, 2-6 (agg 6-8)
Malaysia v Taiwan 2-1, 2-3
(agg 4-4, Malaysia on away goals)
Mongolia v Myanmar 1-0, 0-2 (agg 1-2)
Nepal v East Timor 2-1, 5-0 (agg 7-1)
Sri Lanka v Philippines 1-1, 0-4 (agg 1-5)
Vietnam v Macau 6-0, 7-1 (agg 13-1)

2nd round

China v Laos 7-2, 6-1 (agg 13-3)
Iran v Maldives 4-0, 1-0 (agg 5-0)
Iraq v Yemen 2-0, 0-0 (agg 2-0)
Jordan v Nepal 9-0, 1-1 (agg 10-1)
Kuwait v Philippines 3-0, 2-1 (agg 5-1)
Lebanon v Bangladesh 4-0, 0-2 (agg 4-2)
Oman v Myanmar 2-0, 2-0 (agg 4-0)
Qatar v Vietnam 3-0, 1-2 (agg 4-2)
Saudi Arabia v Hong Kong 3-0, 5-0 (agg 8-0)
Singapore v Malaysia 5-3, 1-1 (agg 6-4)
Syria v Tajikistan 0-3 (awarded), 0-3 (awarded)
(agg 0-6)
Thailand v Palestine 1-0, 2-2 (agg 3-2)
Turkmenistan v Indonesia 1-1, 3-4 (agg 4-5)
United Arab Emirates v India 3-0, 2-2 (agg 5-2)
Uzbekistan v Kyrgyzstan 4-0, 3-0 (agg 7-0)

3rd round

Group A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iraq (Q)	6	5	0	1	14	4	15
Jordan (Q)	6	4	0	2	11	7	12
China	6	3	0	3	10	6	9
Singapore	6	0	0	6	2	20	0

Group B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sth Korea (Q)	6	4	1	1	14	4	13
Lebanon (Q)	6	3	1	2	10	14	10
Kuwait	6	2	2	2	8	9	8
UAE	6	1	0	5	9	14	3

Group C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Uzbekistan (Q)	6	5	1	0	8	1	16
Japan (Q)	6	3	1	2	14	3	10
North Korea	6	2	1	3	3	4	7
Tajikistan	6	0	1	5	1	18	1

Group D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Australia (Q)	6	5	0	1	13	5	15
Oman (Q)	6	2	2	2	3	6	8
Saudi Arabia	6	1	3	2	6	7	6
Thailand	6	1	1	4	4	8	4

Group E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iran (Q)	6	3	3	0	17	5	12
Qatar (Q)	6	2	4	0	10	5	10
Bahrain	6	2	3	1	13	7	9
Indonesia	6	0	0	6	3	26	0

4th round

Group A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
IRAN (F)	8	5	1	2	8	2	16
STH KOREA (F)	8	4	2	2	13	7	14
Uzbekistan (QP)	8	4	2	2	11	6	14
Qatar	8	2	1	5	5	13	7
Lebanon	8	1	2	5	3	12	5

Group B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
JAPAN (F)	8	5	2	1	16	5	17
AUSTRALIA (F)	8	3	4	1	12	7	13
Jordan (QP)	8	3	1	4	7	16	10
Oman	8	2	3	3	7	10	9
Iraq	8	1	2	5	4	8	5

● The top 2 in both groups have qualified for the finals
● The 2 3rd-placed teams went forward to the Asia section play-off

Asia section play-off

Jordan v Uzbekistan 1-1, 1-1 (aet)
(agg 2-2, Jordan 9-8 on pens)

● As Asia section play-off winners, Jordan will meet 5th-placed South American team Uruguay in the intercontinental play-offs (see start of World Cup qualifying section) for a place in the finals

OCEANIA SECTION

● 0.5 finals places available

1st round

(single, round-robin group)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Samoa (Q)	3	2	1	0	5	3	7
Tonga	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Am'can Samoa	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Cook Islands	3	0	1	2	4	6	1

2nd round

Group A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tahiti (Q)	3	3	0	0	18	5	9
N Caledonia (Q)	3	2	0	1	17	6	6
Vanuatu	3	1	0	2	8	9	3
Samoa	3	0	0	3	1	24	0

Group B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
N Zealand (Q)	3	2	1	0	4	2	7
Solomon Is (Q)	3	1	2	0	2	1	5
Fiji	3	0	2	1	1	2	2
Papua NG	3	0	1	2	2	4	1

3rd round

(single, round-robin group)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
N Zealand (QP)	6	6	0	0	17	2	18
New Caledonia	6	4	0	2	17	6	12
Tahiti	6	1	0	5	2	12	3
Solomon Is	6	1	0	5	5	21	3

● As Oceania section winners, New Zealand will meet the 4th-placed CONCACAF team Mexico in the intercontinental play-offs (see start of World Cup qualifying section) for a place in the finals

LEADING GOALSCORERS

Europe
11 Robin Van Persie (Holland)
10 Edin Dzeko (Bosnia-Herzegovina)
South America
11 Luis Suarez (Uruguay)
10 Lionel Messi (Argentina)
CONCACAF
11 Deon McCaulay (Belize)
Africa
6 Mohamed Aboutraika (Egypt)
6 Asamoah Gyan (Ghana)
6 Mohamed Salah (Egypt)
Asia
8 Shinji Okazaki (Japan)
Oceania
8 Georges Gope-Fenepej (New Caledonia)

CONFIRMED FINALISTS TO DATE

Argentina
Australia
Belgium
Bosnia-Herzegovina
Brazil (hosts)
Chile
Colombia
Costa Rica
Ecuador
England
Germany
Holland
Honduras
Iran
Italy
Japan
Russia
South Korea
Spain
Switzerland
United States

● *The World Cup finals draw will be held on December 6 at Costa do Sauipe, Bahia, Brazil*

KEY TO WORLD CUP QUALIFYING TABLES
(F) = qualified for World Cup finals
(QP) = qualified for a play-off
(Q) = qualified for next qualifying round

2015 ASIAN CUP QUALIFIERS

Group A

Oct 15 - Amman
Jordan 0
Oman 0
Att: 6,423. **Ref:** Shukralla (Bhn)

Oct 15 - Singapore
Singapore 2 (Amri 62, Quak 82)
Syria 1 (Rafe 89)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 3,012. **Ref:** Kim (SKo)

ASIAN CUP QUALIFIERS – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Oman	3	2	1	0	3	0	7
Jordan	3	1	2	0	5	1	5
Singapore	3	1	0	2	2	7	3
Syria	3	0	1	2	2	4	1

Remaining fixtures
Nov 15: Oman v Jordan; Syria v Singapore.
Nov 19: Singapore v Jordan; Syria v Oman.
Mar 5, 2014: Jordan v Syria; Oman v Singapore.

his debut in the 2-0 victory over Georgia.

UZBEKISTAN

Sub opens account

Bunyodkor striker Sardor Rashidov marked his debut by scoring the first goal in a 3-1 Asian Cup qualifying victory over Vietnam at Pakhtakor Stadium after coming on as a substitute at half-time.

WALES

Start and finish

Cardiff City's 34-year-old striker Craig Bellamy won his 78th and final cap in the 1-1 draw away to Belgium.

In the same game, Liverpool midfielder Harry Wilson made his debut as a substitute and, at the age of 16 years and 207 days, became Wales' youngest-ever international.

Farewell...Bellamy

ZAMBIA

Trio's arrest warrants

Former assistant coach Patrice Beaumelle took temporary charge of Zambia as they lost 2-0 to Brazil at the Beijing National Stadium, following Herve Renard's decision to quit and take charge of French club side Sochaux.

Three players from DR Congo club side TP Mazembe – Rainford Kalaba, Stoppila Sunzu and Nathan Sinkala – refused to travel to the game in China, claiming they had "malaria and digestive problems".

According to local media reports, the trio managed to cross the border back to DR Congo despite Zambian immigration authorities issuing warrants for their arrest and taking away their passports.

Group B

Oct 15 - Tehran
Iran 2 (J Hosseini 67, Ghoochannejhad 70)
Thailand 1 (Teerasil 80)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 17,330. **Ref:** Baloushi (Qat)

Oct 15 - Beirut
Lebanon 1 (Ghaddar 50)
Kuwait 1 (Nasser 26)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Irmatov (Uzb)

ASIAN CUP QUALIFIERS – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iran	3	2	1	0	8	2	7
Kuwait	3	1	2	0	5	3	5
Lebanon	3	1	1	1	6	8	4
Thailand	3	0	0	3	4	10	0

Remaining fixtures
Nov 15: Kuwait v Lebanon; Thailand v Iran.
Nov 19: Kuwait v Thailand; Lebanon v Iran.
Mar 5, 2014: Iran v Kuwait; Thailand v Lebanon.

Group C

Oct 15 - Jakarta
Indonesia 1 (Solossa 67)
China 1 (Wu Xi 36)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 500[1]. **Ref:** Bashir (Sin)
[1]Home fans banned from attending because of hooliganism at previous home games

Oct 15 - Amman, Jordan
Iraq 0
Saudi Arabia 2 (Hawsawi 34, Al Shamrani 79)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Al Hilali (Oma)

ASIAN CUP QUALIFIERS – GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Saudi Arabia	3	3	0	0	6	2	9
China	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Iraq	3	1	0	2	1	3	3
Indonesia	3	0	1	2	2	4	1

Remaining fixtures
Nov 15: China v Indonesia; Saudi Arabia v Iraq.
Nov 19: China v Saudi Arabia; Indonesia v Iraq.
Mar 5, 2014: Iraq v China; Saudi Arabia v Indonesia.

Group D

Oct 13 - Doha
Qatar 6 (Ibrahim pen 4, 61, 75, Al Haydos 23, Soria 70, Afif 90+1)
Yemen 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 11,920. **Ref:** Kovalenko (Uzb)
Sent off: Al Worafi (Yemen) 41min

Oct 15 - Shah Alam
Malaysia 1 (Norshahrul 70)
Bahrain 1 (Saleh 45)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Sato (Jap)

ASIAN CUP QUALIFIERS – GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bahrain	3	2	1	0	4	1	7
Qatar	3	2	0	1	8	1	6
Malaysia	3	1	1	1	3	4	4
Yemen	3	0	0	3	1	10	0

Remaining fixtures
Nov 15: Bahrain v Malaysia; Yemen v Qatar.
Nov 19: Bahrain v Yemen; Malaysia v Qatar.
Mar 5, 2014: Qatar v Bahrain; Yemen v Malaysia.

Group E

Oct 15 - Hong Kong
Hong Kong 0
United Arab Emirates 4 (Mabkhout 29, 55, 89, Abbas 90+5)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 7,923. **Ref:** Kim (SKo)

Oct 15 - Tashkent
Uzbekistan 3 (Rashidov 69, Au Van Hoan og 74, Sergeev 90+2)
Vietnam 1 (Nguyen Trong Hoang 77)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,675. **Ref:** Mohsen (Irn)

ASIAN CUP QUALIFIERS – GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
UAE	3	3	0	0	8	2	9
Uzbekistan	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Hong Kong	3	1	1	1	1	4	4
Vietnam	3	0	0	3	2	6	0

Remaining fixtures
Nov 15: UAE v Hong Kong; Vietnam v Uzbekistan.
Nov 19: Hong Kong v Uzbekistan; UAE v Vietnam.
Mar 5, 2014: Uzbekistan v UAE; Vietnam v Hong Kong.

Top 2 in each group and the 3rd-placed team with the best record qualify for finals, to which hosts Australia, Japan, North Korea, South Korea and the 2014 AFC Challenge Cup winner qualify automatically

PHILIPPINE PEACE CUP

Played in Bacolod, Philippines

Oct 11
Philippines 1 (J Younghusband 45+2)
Taiwan 2 (Li Mao 14, Lin Chang-lun 65)
HT: 1-1

Oct 13
Taiwan 0
Pakistan 1 (Rehman 7)
HT: 0-1

Oct 15
Philippines 3 (Reichelt 34, Greatwich 78, Schrock 88)
Pakistan 1 (Ullah 15)
HT: 1-1

PHILIPPINE PEACE CUP – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Philippines	2	1	0	1	4	3	3
Taiwan	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
Pakistan	2	1	0	1	2	3	3

FRIENDLIES

Tuesday, October 8

Oct 8 - Beirut
Lebanon 1 (Chaito 58)
Iraq 1 (Abdul-Amir 85)
HT: 0-0

Wednesday, October 9

Oct 9 - Amman
Jordan 1 (Adous 67)
Kuwait 1 (Nasser 73)
HT: 0-0

Oct 9 - Muscat
Oman 0
Mauritania 0

Oct 9 - Doha
Qatar 1 (Al Sayed 16)
Vietnam 2 (Nguyen Trong Hoang 20, 29)
HT: 1-2

Thursday, October 10

Oct 10 - Bangkok
Thailand 1 (Chatree 50)
Bahrain 0
HT: 0-0

Friday, October 11

Oct 11 - Paris
France 6 (Ribery pen 8, Giroud 16, 27, Cabaye 29, Debuchy 47, Benzema 51)
Australia 0
HT: 4-0. **Att:** 40,710. **Ref:** Soares Dias (Por)
France: Lloris - Debuchy, Varane, Abidal (Sakho 46), Evra (Clichy 62), Cabaye (Sissoko 83), Pogba (Matuidi 62), Remy, Nasri, Ribery (Valbuena 62), Giroud (Benzema 46).
Australia: Langerak - Wilkshire (Leckie 69), Neill, Williams, Carney (Davidson 46), Jedinak, Holland, Bresciano, Cahill (Kennedy 80), McKay, Kruse (Rukavytsya 46).

Oct 11 - Agadir
Morocco 1 (El Adoua 50)
South Africa 1 (Rantie 9)
HT: 0-1
Morocco: Amsif - Benatia (Oulhaj 80), El Adoua, Feddal, Noussir (El Khaliqi 46), Bergdich, Obbadi (Taarabt 46), Belhanda (Bemammer 75), Barrada (Berrabah 80), El Kaddouri (Saidi 46), El Arabi.
South Africa: Khune - Ngcongca, Khumalo, Xulu, Masilela (Ntlhe 67), Claasen, Furman, Vilakazi (Zungu 46), Chabangu (Patosi 59), Parker (Letsholonyane 83), Rantie (Erasmus 70).

Oct 11 - Novi Sad
Serbia 2 (Tadic 59, Jojic 90+1)
Japan 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Aydinus (Tur)
Serbia: Stojkovic - Rukavina, Tomovic, Nastasic, Ivanovic, D Stankovic (Radovanovic 11; Jojic 86), Matic (Milivojevic 60), Basta, Tadic (Petrovic 78), Z Tosic (Zivkovic 60), Djordjevic (Scepovic 60).
Japan: Kawashima - Uchida, Yoshida, Konno, Nagatomo, Hasebe (Hosogai 67), Endo, Okazaki (Havenaar 89), Honda, Kagawa (Inui 86), Kakitani (Kiyotake 67).

Saturday, October 12

Oct 12 - Seoul
South Korea 0
Brazil 2 (Neymar 43, Oscar 48)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 65,308. **Ref:** Irmatov (Uzb)
South Korea: Jung Sung-ryong - Kim Young-gwon, Hong Jeong-ho, Kim Jin-soo, Lee Yong, Han Kook-young, Ki Sung-yueng, Lee Chung-yong (Yun Il-lok 85), Koo Ja-cheol (Son Heung-min 64), Kim Bo-kyung (Go Yo-han 77), Ji Dong-won (Lee Keun-ho 50).
Brazil: Jefferson - Daniel Alves, David Luiz, Dante, Marcelo (Maxwell 80), Luiz Gustavo (Lucas Leiva 67), Paulinho (Hernanes 68), Oscar (Bernard 78), Hulk (Ramires 46), Jo, Neymar.

Tuesday, October 15

Oct 15 - Zhodino
Belarus 1 (Tigorev 44)
Japan 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Slyva (Lit)
Belarus: Veremko - Radkov, Veretsilo, Verkhovtsov, Bordachev (Trubilo 46), Sitko (Putsilo 46), Bressan (Krivets 69), Kislyak, Tigorev (Volodko 46), Kalachev (Baga 88), Kornilenko (Rodionov 46).
Japan: Kawashima - Uchida (Havenaar 85), Yoshida, Konno, Nagatomo (G Sakai 61), Hasebe (Yamaguchi 69), Endo, Okazaki, Honda, Kagawa, Kakitani (Morishige 51)

Oct 15 - Beijing, China
Brazil 2 (Oscar 59, Dede 65)
Zambia 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Fan (Chn)
Brazil: Diego Cavalieri - Daniel Alves, Dede, David Luiz (Henrique 70), Maxwell, Lucas Leiva, Paulinho (Hernanes 62), Ramires (Oscar 46), Lucas Moura (Hulk 46), Alexandre Pato (Jo 46), Neymar (Bernard 79).
Zambia: Mweene - Chongo (Chisenga 61), Chama, Himoonde, Mbola, Mtonga, Lungu (Musakanya 85), Mayuka (Chamanga 67), C Katongo (Musonda 90), Tembo (Chivuta 76), J Mulenga (Kola 90+2).

Oct 15 - London
Canada 0
Australia 3 (Kennedy 1, Vidosic 52, Leckie 79)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 3,741. **Ref:** Dean (Eng)
Canada: Borjan - Ledgerwood (Cebara 46), Henry, Straith, De Jong (Piette 60), Ricketts, De Guzman (Becker 25), Edgar, Jackson (Morgan 54), Hume (Osorio 46), De Rosario (Teibert 46).
Australia: Langerak (Ryan 46) - Williams (Bozanic 68), Neill, Davidson, Carney, Holland, McKay, Bresciano (Rukavytsya 73), Jedinak (Irvine 83), Vidosic, Kennedy (Leckie 62).

Oct 15 - Bishkek
Kyrgyzstan 1 (Israilov 47)
Tajikistan 4 (Davronov 6, D Vasiyev 29, Tokhirov 32, Savankulov 40)
HT: 0-4

Oct 15 - Cheonan
South Korea 3 (Koo Ja-cheol 37, Son Heung-min 46, Kim Bo-kyung 56)
Mali 1 (M Maiga 27)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 26,118. **Ref:** Nishimura (Jap)
South Korea: Jung Sung-ryong - Kim Jin-su, Kim Young-gwon, Hong Jeong-ho, Lee Yong, Son Heung-min (Yun Il-lok 86), Ki Sung-yeung, Han Kook-young (Park Jong-woo 88), Lee Chung-yong (Go Yo-han 71), Koo Ja-cheol (Kim Bo-kyung 53), Lee Keun-ho.
Mali: Samake - N'Diaye, O Coulibaly (B Sylla 87), I Coulibaly (I Keita 90+1), Doumbia, Yatabare, A Traore (Samassa 72), Y Sylla (Sow 58), S Keita, M Maiga, Dembele.

Oct 15 - Port of Spain
Trinidad & Tobago 0
New Zealand 0
Att: 14,000. **Ref:** Lancaster (Guy)
Trinidad & Tobago: J-M Williams (Phillip 46) - Hoyte, Abu Bakr, Mitchell, Bateau, Peltier (Hector 61), Hyland (George 83), Boucaud, Molino (Guerra 83), Plaza (Joseph 61), K Jones (Winchester 87).
New Zealand: Moss - Durante, Reid, Lochhead, Smith (Henderson 64), Clapham (Butler 77), Bertos (Tuiloma 46), McGlinchey, Brockie, Barbarouses, Fallon.

Monday, October 28

Oct 28 - Amman
Jordan 1 (Aqel pen 42)
Nigeria 0
HT: 1-0

FINLAND: VEIKKAUSLIIGA

Same again for HJK

Photo: Jussi Eskola

Getting to be a habit...HJK's squad pose with the trophy after yet another league title

HJK's domination of Finnish football continued as the Helsinki-based side won the league championship for a fifth consecutive season.

After a less-than-impressive start to the campaign, in which they lost four of their opening 13 games, Sixten Bostrom's team clinched the title with two matches to spare on the back of a 20-game unbeaten run. HJK will now hope to fare better in next season's Champions League campaign than they did in this after falling to Nomme Kalju of Estonia in the second qualifying round.

HJK have won the Finnish national title a record 26 times

Honka and VPS will enter the Europa League along with RoPS, who won the Finnish Cup but were second from bottom in the league. JJK, who finished 12 points below them, were relegated and will be replaced by SJK.

For final league table, go to page 89

PLAYER OF THE SEASON
ERFAN ZENELI (HJK)
The 26-year-old of Kosovar-Albanian descent topped the league charts for assists and made his Finland debut against Slovenia in August.

COACH OF THE SEASON
SIXTEN BOSTROM (HJK)
A former international who won his first league title as a coach after replacing Antti Muurinen in January.

NEWCOMER OF THE SEASON
TIM VAYRYNEN (Honka)
The league's top scorer with 17 goals in 24 games, he also grabbed a hat-trick as Finland Under-21s beat Wales Under-21s 5-1 in August.

Goals aplenty...Vayrynen

ICELAND: URVALSDEILD

KR triumph once more

PLAYER OF THE YEAR
BJORN SVERRISSON (FH)
The 23-year-old's nine goals and impressive performances earned him a move to Viking of Norway for next season.

COACH OF THE SEASON
RUNAR KRISTINSSON (KR)
Since taking his first senior coaching post midway through 2010 he has now won the league twice.

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR
ARNOR INGVI TRAUSTASON (Keflavik)
The Under-21 international midfielder has become a key player for his club side, despite being only 20.

Work ethic...Kristinsson

KR won the league to stretch their record to 26 Icelandic championships, six more than the next-best haul of Reykjavik rivals Valur.

KR last won the title two years ago and coach Runar Kristinsson said: "We have great team spirit like we did in 2011, but the key thing is that the players are ready to work together.

"I have many good players on the bench; some get frustrated and even angry not to get on the pitch but that is the way I like it."

KR's points tally of 52 was a record for the Icelandic top flight and was helped by going unbeaten at home, winning 10 of their 11 games. They will enter next season's Champions League in the second qualifying round, hoping to win a tie for the first time since 2000.

Kristinsson added: "If you want to have a team battling for the top in various fields like the league, cup and European games you must use a wide selection of players and we have that luxury."

FH and Stjarnan, who finished second and third respectively, will enter the Europa League in the first qualifying round, along with Icelandic Cup winners Fram, who beat Stjarnan on penalties after a 3-3 draw in the Final to claim their first silverware for 23 years.

Despite their Cup success, Fram were poor in the league and finished third from bottom. The teams below them, Vikingur Olafsvik and IA, were relegated, with second-tier champions Fjolnir and Vikingur Reykjavik replacing them. Breidablik won the League Cup, beating Valur 3-2 in the Final.

For final league table, go to page 90

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND: PREMIER DIVISION

Buckley ends St Pat's 14-year title wait

Photo: INPHO/Donall Farmer

Guard of honour...St Patrick's Athletic are applauded on to the field by opponents Derry City having clinched the Premier Division championship

St Patrick's Athletic, who last won the league in 1999, collected their eighth championship – although Saints fans will claim that figure should be nine after they finished top in 2002, only to be deducted nine points for registration problems with one of their players, which gave the title to Shelbourne.

Liam Buckley, who led Pat's to success 14 years ago, was in charge this time as well, having returned to the Dublin-based club in December 2011.

He was sacked before after a few bad European and domestic results before Christmas 1999, but the former Republic of Ireland striker hopes he can stay around longer this time and is already looking ahead to Europe next year.

"We are not the finished article yet and it's no secret that you need to be better with the ball when you are playing in Europe, but hopefully we can continue to improve," says Buckley. "Fourteen years on, I am a bit older and wiser, and I appreciated this win more than in 1999.

"This time round the squad was built by myself, whereas 14 years ago I inherited the team from former manager Pat Dolan."

After several players followed assistant manager Trevor Croly when he moved to take charge of Shamrock Rovers during the close season, the outlook seemed bleak for the Saints. An early-season 3-0 loss to Rovers added to the worries, but after losing at home to Dundalk in April, the team went on a 13-game unbeaten run which put them in the driving seat.

> "It's a family club and I'm just the caretaker"
>
> Property developer Garret Kelleher, who bought St Pat's in 2007

A late run by Dundalk was killed off in September, when Pat's won 2-0, and the title was clinched with a 2-0 home win over defending champions Sligo Rovers and with two games to spare.

Stephen Kenny, sacked by Shamrock last season, showed the Hoops' board they were a bit premature by building a new team at Dundalk, a club not flushed with money, and finish second.

Mick Cooke took Drogheda to the League Cup and FAI Cup Finals but lost both – weeks after being told by the board that his contract would not be renewed for next season. With Sligo already sure of a Europa League spot after finishing third in the league, their FAI Cup win over Drogheda meant fourth-place Derry City also qualified for the Europa League. By then, however, Derry had also parted company with their manager, Declan Devine.

Shamrock Rovers won three cups – the All-Ireland Cup, League Cup and Leinster Senior Cup – but missed out on Europe for the second successive season.

Shelbourne, a proud club who have fallen on hard times, were relegated and will be replaced by First Division champions Athlone Town and their loquacious manager, Roddy Collins.

Bohemians just avoided the relegation play-offs after finishing two points ahead of Bray Wanderers, who preserved their own top-flight status with a dramatic 5-4 aggregate win over Longford Town.

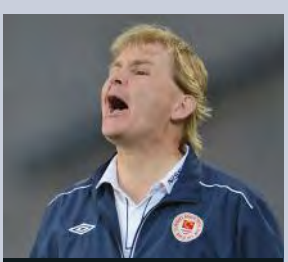
Sean Creedon

For final league table, go to page 91

PLAYER OF THE SEASON
KILLIAN BRENNAN (St Patrick's Athletic)
From a footballing family in Drogheda – brothers Sean, Ryan and Gavin all play in the League of Ireland – he is the best left-sided midfielder in the league.

MANAGER OF THE SEASON
LIAM BUCKLEY (St Patrick's Athletic)
Won two caps in the 1980s and played for Santander in Spain and Waregem in Belgium. In his second spell in charge of Pat's, he has also coached Shamrock Rovers, Sporting Fingal and Athlone Town (twice).

NEWCOMER OF THE SEASON
PATRICK HOBAN (Dundalk)
After a season with Bristol City, he returned to first division Mervue United in his native Galway before Dundalk boss Stephen Kenny came calling this term. And he didn't disappoint, scoring some vital goals.



Champion again...Buckley

SWEDEN: ALLSVENSKAN

Malmo's young guns take title

Champions again...Malmo players celebrate after clinching their 20th Swedish title with a 2-0 victory at rivals Elfsborg

Malmo coach Rikard Norling clearly has the courage of his convictions. During pre-season he was the only boss in the Swedish elite to pick his own team as title favourites – and seven months later he was proved to be absolutely correct as they clinched their 20th league title.

More energised, unified and potent as the season wore on, Malmo ultimately had far more in the tank than their rivals. They sealed the deal with a 2-0 win at last year's champions Elfsborg, courtesy of two goals from wide midfielder Guillermo Molins.

With an average age of less than 22, Malmo's squad was the youngest in the league, and fortified by a half-dozen youth-academy graduates they had enough hunger for two teams.

In total, five Malmo players were selected for the Allsvenskan All-Star line-up and every one of the quintet fully deserved the accolade. Goalkeeper Johan Dahlin, full-back Miiko Albornoz and central defender Pontus Jansson all did a fine job on guard duty. Skipper Jiloan Hamad was his imaginative and exuberant self in midfield, while striker Magnus Eriksson – who joined in January following an unhappy stint in Belgium with Gent – turned out to be the most accomplished attacking force in the country, scoring 11 goals and setting up a further 14.

PLAYER OF THE SEASON

Jiloan Hamad (Malmo)

At 23 he became the youngest-ever captain of a Swedish title-winning side and is now due to join German club Hoffenheim in January.

COACH OF THE SEASON

Rikard Norling (Malmo)

After leading AIK to the runners-up spot in 2006, he demonstrated even more tactical and psychological good sense in steering Malmo to the big one.

NEWCOMER OF THE SEASON

Daniel Amartey (Djurgarden)

The 18-year-old central defender or midfield holder immediately looked at home after breaking into the Djurgarden first team this season. Liverpool are said to be watching with interest.

Norling...tactical master

Keeping his cool

Much of the credit must go to Norling. Despite rumours that he was unpopular in the boardroom – and that he had an antagonistic relationship with director of sport Per Agren – the bespectacled coach kept his cool and focus throughout, intelligently achieving a mix of collective discipline and off-the-leash risk-taking.

Elsewhere, the marksmanship of Nigerian striker Kennedy Igboananike – who arrived from Djurgarden and scored 14 goals – together with the creativity of Ugandan winger Martin Kayongo-Mutumba helped AIK to second place, five points shy of Malmo. IFK did just enough to secure the third and final European qualifying slot, two points ahead of the defensive masters of Kalmar.

Elfsborg, becalmed by too many draws, eventually had to make do with an underwhelming sixth place, while southern powerhouse Helsingborg were unpredictable in the extreme:

Creative force...AIK's Kayongo-Mutumba

good enough to spend no fewer than 13 weeks in first place, but spinning out of control in the last-third of the campaign and ending up fifth.

If there was a prize for the biggest fall from grace, it would have to go to Hacken. Last season's runners-up, they struggled all year long and were flattered to end up 10th.

As widely predicted, Syrianska finished bottom – recording only three wins – and were relegated along with Osters. Falkenberg and Orebro will take their places.

Nick Bidwell

For final league table, go to page 93

ESM TEAM OF THE MONTH OCTOBER 2013

European Sports Media

HOW IT WORKS

Every month, journalists from each member of the European Sports Media group select their first XI based on the best individual performances from Europe's top competitions. For details of how each ESM member voted, visit worldsoccer.com/esm11

ESM – EUROPEAN SPORTS MEDIA

The members of ESM are:

A Bola (Portugal)
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Sport Express (Russia)
De Telegraaf (Holland)
TIPSbladet (Denmark)
World Soccer (England)

More details of votes at worldsoccer.com/votes

SEASON RANKINGS

Cumulative votes through the season

GOALKEEPERS

Morgan De Sanctis (Roma)	4
Manuel Neuer (Bayern Muncih)	3
Victor Valdes (Barcelona)	3
Artur Boruc (Southampton)	2
Thibaut Courtois (Atletico Madrid)	2
Hugo Lloris (Tottenham Hotspur)	2
Roman Weidenfeller (Borussia Dortmund)	2
Samir Handanovic (Internazionale)	1
Helton (Porto)	1
Bernd Leno (Bayer Leverkusen)	1
Pepe Reina (Napoli)	1

DEFENDERS

David Alaba (Bayern Munich)	13
Mehdi Benatia (Roma)	9
Gerard Pique (Barcelona)	7
Mats Hummels (Borussia Dortmund)	6
Federico Balzaretti (Roma)	4
Dante (Bayern Munich)	4
Marquinhos (Paris Saint-Germain)	4
Daniel Alves (Barcelona)	3
Diego Godin (Atletico Madrid)	3
Leighton Baines (Everton)	2
Jerome Boateng (Bayern Munich)	2
Leandro Castan (Roma)	2
Fabinho (Monaco)	2
Kevin Grosskreutz (Borussia Dortmund)	2
Juanfran (Atletico Madrid)	2
Laurent Koscielny (Arsenal)	2
Per Mertesacker (Arsenal)	2
Bacary Sagna (Arsenal)	2
Gregory Van der Wiel (Paris Saint-Germain)	2
Adriano (Barcelona)	1
Andrea Barzagli (Juventus)	1
Sebastien Boenisch (Bayer Leverkusen)	1
Gary Cahill (Chelsea)	1
Paolo Cannavaro (Napoli)	1
Giorgio Chiellini (Juventus)	1
Branislav Ivanovic (Chelsea)	1
Simon Kjaer (Lille)	1
Layvin Kurzawa (Monaco)	1
Filipe Luis (Atletico Madrid)	1
Maicon (Roma)	1
Marcelo (Real Madrid)	1
Miranda (Atletico Madrid)	1
Andrea Ranocchia (Internazionale)	1
Neven Subotic (Borussia Dortmund)	1
Kyle Walker (Tottenham Hotspur)	1
Kurt Zouma (Saint-Etienne)	1

MIDFIELDERS

Mesut Ozil (Arsenal)	12
Aaron Ramsey (Arsenal)	11
Philipp Lahm (Bayern Munich)	6
Franck Ribery (Bayern Munich)	6
Isco (Real Madrid)	4
Miralem Pjanic (Roma)	4
Marco Reus (Borussia Dortmund)	4
Daniele De Rossi (Roma)	3
Yaya Toure (Manchester City)	3
Cesc Fabregas (Barcelona)	2
Koke (Atletico Madrid)	2
Henrikh Mkhitaryan (Borussia Dortmund)	2
Paul Pogba (Juventus)	2
Nuri Sahin (Borussia Dortmund)	2
Kevin Strootman (Roma)	2
Marco Verratti (Paris Saint-Germain)	2
Jack Wilshere (Arsenal)	2
Angel Di Maria (Real Madrid)	1
Christian Eriksen (Tottenham Hotspur)	1
Marek Hamsik (Napoli)	1
Eden Hazard (Chelsea)	1
Andres Iniesta (Barcelona)	1
Thomas Muller (Bayern Munich)	1
Oscar (Chelsea)	1
Bastian Schweinsteiger (Bayern Munich)	1
Oliver Torres (Atletico Madrid)	1
Arturo Vidal (Juventus)	1

FORWARDS

Diego Costa (Atletico Madrid)	14
Zlatan Ibrahimovic (Paris Saint-Germain)	12
Lionel Messi (Barcelona)	11
Cristiano Ronaldo (Real Madrid)	8
Luis Suarez (Liverpool)	6
Radamel Falcao (Monaco)	5
Francesco Totti (Roma)	3
Neymar (Barcelona)	2
Ricardo Alvarez (Internazionale)	1
Edinson Cavani (Paris Saint-Germain)	1
Robert Lewandowski (Borussia Dortmund)	1
Pedro (Barcelona)	1
Arjen Robben (Bayern Munich)	1
Wayne Rooney (Manchester United)	1
Alexis Sanchez (Barcelona)	1
Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool)	1
Fernando Torres (Chelsea)	1

AZERBAIJAN

Super Cup revenge

Last season's Azerbaijan Cup runners-up Khazar Lankaran gained some revenge with a 2-1 victory over double winners Neftchi Baku in the Super Cup. Rasim Ramaldanov scored the winner in the last minute after Carlos Cardoso had cancelled out Mbilla Etame's opener for Khazar.

Winner...Ramaldanov

33 games Salzburg are unbeaten in the Austrian Bundesliga after a 1-0 win against Sturm Graz

BULGARIA

Neftohimic on brink

Debt-ridden Neftohimic are on the verge of bankruptcy and could be demoted to the amateur leagues.

Players who do not own homes locally have been released and those that remain must play for free.

The club, who were promoted to the top flight this year, will now play their home games in Nessebar, which is 30km away from their base in Burgas, as they can no longer afford the rent at the Lazur stadium, which is owned by their local rivals Chernomorets.

"We're doing everything possible to stay in the league," says the club's executive director Kostadin Djambazov. "We have released the guys who are not from Burgas as we cannot continue to pay for their apartments."

Club Results

EUROPE

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group A

Oct 23

Bayer Leverkusen (Ger) 4 (Kiessling 22, 72, Rolfes pen 50, Sam 57)
Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 25,184. **Ref:** Lannoy (Fra)
Leverkusen: Leno - Donati, Toprak, Spahic (Wollscheid 56), Boenisch, Rolfes, Can, Castro, Sam, Son (Hegeler 71), Kiessling (Derdiyok 76).
Shakhtar: Pyatov - Srna, Kucher, Rakitskyi, Shevchuk, Fernando (Ilsinho 61), Hubschman, Douglas Costa, Alex Teixeira, Taison (Bernard 46), Luiz Adriano (Ferreyra 78).

Oct 23

Manchester United (Eng) 1 (Inigo Martinez og 2)
Real Sociedad (Spa) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 74,500. **Ref:** Nijhuis (Hol)
Man Utd: De Gea - Rafael (Smalling 59), Jones, Evans, Evra, Carrick, Giggs, Valencia, Kagawa, Hernandez (Young 80), Rooney.
Sociedad: Bravo - Carlos Martinez, Mikel Gonzalez, Inigo Martinez, De la Bella, Bergara, Zurutuza (Castro 75), Xabi Prieto (Ruben Pardo 68), Vela, Griezmann, Seferovic (Agirretxe 75).

Nov 5

Real Sociedad 0
Manchester United 0
Att: 30,998. **Ref:** Rizzoli (Ita)
Sociedad: Bravo - Carlos Martinez, Mikel Gonzalez, Inigo Martinez, De la Bella, Bergara, Zurutuza, Ruben Pardo (Xabi Prieto 72), Griezmann (Seferovic 80), Agirretxe (Castro 63), Vela.
Man Utd: De Gea - Smalling, Ferdinand, Vidic, Evra, Valencia, Giggs, Kagawa (Jones 90+1), Fellaini, Rooney (Van Persie 63), Hernandez (Young 63). *Sent off: Fellaini 90min.*

Nov 5

Shakhtar Donetsk 0
Bayer Leverkusen 0
Att: 50,115. **Ref:** Collum (Sco)
Shakhtar: Pyatov - Srna, Kucher, Rakitskyi, Shevchuk, Fernando, Hubschman, Douglas Costa (Taison 78), Alex Teixeira, Bernard (Ilsinho 64), Ferreyra (Luiz Adriano 78).
Leverkusen: Leno - Donati, Spahic, Toprak, Boenisch, Rolfes, Bender, Castro (Can 69), Sam (Kruse 90+3), Son (Hegeler 78), Kiessling.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man United	4	2	2	0	6	3	8
Leverkusen	4	2	1	1	8	5	7
Shakhtar	4	1	2	1	3	5	5
Sociedad	4	0	1	3	1	5	1

Sep 17	Manchester United v Leverkusen	4-2
	Real Sociedad v Shakhtar	0-2
Oct 2	Leverkusen v Real Sociedad	2-1
	Shakhtar v Manchester United	1-1
Oct 23	Leverkusen v Shakhtar	4-0
	Manchester United v Real Sociedad	1-0
Nov 5	Real Sociedad v Manchester United	0-0
	Shakhtar v Leverkusen	0-0
Nov 27	Leverkusen v Manchester United	
	Shakhtar v Real Sociedad	
Dec 10	Manchester United v Shakhtar	
	Real Sociedad v Leverkusen	

Group B

Oct 23

Galatasaray (Tur) 3 (Felipe Melo 10, Sneijder 38, Drogba 45+1)
Copenhagen (Den) 1 (Claudemir 88)
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 42,798. **Ref:** Stavrev (Mac)
Galatasaray: Muslera - Eboue, Semih, Chedjou, Nounkeu, Felipe Melo (Gulselam 76), Selcuk, Sneijder (Amrabat 80), Bruma, Drogba (Umut 86), Burak.
Copenhagen: Wiland - Jacobsen, Mellberg, Sigurdsson, Bengtsson, Gislason (Bolanos 46), Claudemir, Delaney, Jorgensen, Vetokele (Adi 46), Braaten (Toutouh 84).

Oct 23

Real Madrid (Spa) 2 (Cristiano Ronaldo 4, pen 29)
Juventus (Ita) 1 (Llorente 22)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 77,856. **Ref:** Grafe (Ger)
Real Madrid: Casillas - Arbeloa, Sergio Ramos, Pepe, Marcelo, Khedira, Illarramendi (Isco 72), Di Maria (Morata 79), Modric, Cristiano Ronaldo, Benzema (Bale 67).
Juventus: Buffon - Caceres, Barzagli, Chiellini, Ogbonna (Giovinco 69), Vidal, Pirlo (Asamoah 59), Pogba, Tevez, Llorente (Bonucci 50), Marchisio. *Sent off: Chiellini 48min.*

Nov 5

Copenhagen 1 (Braaten 6)
Galatasaray 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 36,204. **Ref:** Atkinson (Eng)
Copenhagen: Wiland - Jacobsen, Mellberg, Sigurdsson, Bengtsson, Gislason (Bolanos 56), Claudemir (Margreitter 86), Delaney, Braaten, Jorgensen, Toutouh (Kristensen 75).
Galatasaray: Eray - Eboue, Semih (Umut 76), Chedjou, Riera, Felipe Melo, Selcuk, Bruma, Aydin (Gulselam 62), Burak (Amrabat 82), Drogba.

Nov 5

Juventus 2 (Vidal pen 42, Llorente 65)
Real Madrid 2 (Cristiano Ronaldo 52, Bale 60)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 40,696. **Ref:** Webb (Eng)
Juventus: Buffon - Caceres, Barzagli, Bonucci, Asamoah, Vidal, Pirlo, Pogba, Marchisio, Llorente (Giovinco 88), Tevez (Quagliarella 82).
Real Madrid: Casillas - Sergio Ramos, Varane, Pepe, Marcelo, Khedira, Xabi Alonso (Illarramendi 71), Modric, Bale (Di Maria 75), Benzema (Jese 81), Cristiano Ronaldo.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real Madrid	4	3	1	0	14	4	10
Galatasaray	4	1	1	2	6	10	4
Copenhagen	4	1	1	2	3	8	4
Juventus	4	0	3	1	6	7	3

Sep 17	Copenhagen v Juventus	1-1
	Galatasaray v Real Madrid	1-6
Oct 2	Juventus v Galatasaray	2-2
	Real Madrid v Copenhagen	4-0
Oct 23	Galatasaray v Copenhagen	3-1
	Real Madrid v Juventus	2-1
Nov 5	Copenhagen v Galatasaray	1-0
	Juventus v Real Madrid	2-2
Nov 27	Juventus v Copenhagen	
	Real Madrid v Galatasaray	
Dec 10	Copenhagen v Real Madrid	
	Galatasaray v Juventus	

Group C

Oct 23

Anderlecht (Blg) 0
Paris Saint-Germain (Fra) 5 (Ibrahimovic 17, 22, 36, 62, Cavani 52)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 18,465. **Ref:** Fernandez Borbalan (Spa)
Anderlecht: Kaminski - Mbemba, Kouyate, Nuytinck, N'Sakala, Tielemans, Kljestan, Gillet, Praet (Milivojevic 72), Suarez (Acheampong 46), Mitrovic (Cyriac 72).
PSG: Sirigu - Van der Wiel, Alex (Camara 56), Marquinhos, Maxwell, Verratti, Thiago Motta, Matuidi (Rabiot 64), Cavani, Ibrahimovic, Lavezzi (Lucas Moura 71).

Oct 23

Benfica (Por) 1 (Cardozo 83)
Olympiakos (Gre) 1 (Dominguez 29)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 38,149. **Ref:** Undiano Mallenco (Spa)
Benfica: Artur - Andre Almeida, Luisao, Garay, Siqueira, Perez (Ruben Amorim 82), Matic, Gaitan (Rodrigo 82), Lima, Cardozo, John (Ivan Cavaleiro 46).
Olympiakos: Roberto - Leandro Salino, Manolas, Siovas, Holebas, Samaris, Maniatis, Yatabare (Yatabare 69), Dominguez (Medjani 88), Weiss (N'Dinga 56), Mitroglou.

Nov 5

Olympiakos 1 (Manolas 13)
Benfica 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 31,461. **Ref:** Skomina (Sln)
Olympiakos: Roberto - Leandro Salino, Manolas, Siovas, Holebas, Samaris, Maniatis, Yatabare (N'Dinga 56), Saviola (Dominguez 46), David Fuster (Bong 74), Mitroglou.
Benfica: Artur - Pereira, Luisao, Garay, Silvio, Perez, Matic, Ruben Amorim (Ivan Cavaleiro 78), Gaitan, Markovic (Djuricic 74), Cardozo (Lima 71).

Nov 5

Paris Saint-Germain 1 (Ibrahimovic 70)
Anderlecht 1 (De Zeeuw 68)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 43,091. **Ref:** Strahonja (Cro)
PSG: Sirigu - Van der Wiel, Alex, Marquinhos (Thiago Silva 62), Maxwell, Verratti (Menez 76), Thiago Motta, Matuidi, Lucas Moura, Ibrahimovic, Lavezzi (Pastore 75).
Anderlecht: Kaminski - Vanden Borre, Kouyate, Mbemba, Deschacht, Milivojevic, Kljestan, Praet (Acheampong 79), De Zeeuw (Nuytinck 90+1), N'Sakala, Mitrovic (Tielemans 87).
Sent off: Kljestan 82min.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PSG	4	3	1	0	13	2	10
Olympiakos	4	2	1	1	6	5	7
Benfica	4	1	1	2	3	5	4
Anderlecht	4	0	1	3	1	11	1

Sep 17	Benfica v Anderlecht	2-0
	Olympiakos v Paris Saint-Germain	1-4
Oct 2	Anderlecht v Olympiakos	0-3
	Paris Saint-Germain v Benfica	3-0
Oct 23	Anderlecht v Paris Saint-Germain	0-5
	Benfica v Olympiakos	1-1
Nov 5	Olympiakos v Benfica	1-0
	Paris Saint-Germain v Anderlecht	1-1
Nov 27	Anderlecht v Benfica	
	Paris Saint-Germain v Olympiakos	
Dec 10	Benfica v Paris Saint-Germain	
	Olympiakos v Anderlecht	

Group D

Oct 23

Bayern Munich (Ger) 5 (Ribery pen 25, 61, Alaba 37, Schweinsteiger 64, Gotze 90+1)
Viktoria Plzen (CzR) 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 68,000. **Ref:** Kelly (Rol)
Bayern: Neuer - Rafinha, Van Buyten, Contento, Alaba, Lahm (Gotze 63), Robben, Kroos, Schweinsteiger, Ribery (Muller 67), Mandzukic (Pizarro 71).
Plzen: Kozacik - Reznik, Cisovsky, Hubnik, Limbersky (Kovarik 75), Prochazka, Horvath (Duris 63), Rajtoral, Horava, Petrzela (Tecl 86), Kolar.

Oct 23

CSKA Moscow (Rus) 1 (Tosic 32)
Manchester City (Eng) 2 (Aguero 34, 42)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 14,000. **Ref:** Hategan (Rom)
CSKA: Akinfeev - Nababkin, V Berezutsky (A Berezutsky 6), Ignashevich, Schennikov, Milanov, Wernbloom, Tosic, Honda, Zuber (Musa 50), Doumbia.
Man City: Hart - Zabaleta, Nastasic, Kolarov, Fernandinho, Toure, Javi Garcia, Jesus Navas, Silva (Nasri 79), Negredo (Dzeko 72), Aguero (Clichy 89).

Nov 5

Manchester City 5 (Aguero pen 3, 20, Negredo 30, 51, 90+3)
CSKA Moscow 2 (Doumbia 45+1, pen 71)
HT: 3-1. **Att:** 38,512. **Ref:** Velasco Carballo (Spa)
Man City: Pantilimon - Zabaleta, Demichelis, Nastasic, Clichy, Nasri (Jesus Navas 77), Toure, Fernandinho (Milner 46), Silva (Kolarov 66), Negredo, Aguero.
CSKA: Akinfeev - Nababkin, A Berezutsky, Ignashevich, Schennikov, Milanov (Elm 46), Wernbloom, Musa (Zuber 45), Honda (Vitinho 79), Doumbia, Tosic.

Nov 5

Viktoria Plzen 0
Bayern Munich 1 (Mandzukic 65)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 11,360. **Ref:** Mateu Lahoz (Spa)
Plzen: Kozacik - Rajtoral, Cisovsky, Prochazka, Hubnik (Reznik 71), Horvath, Horava, Petrzela, Kolar, Duris (Pospisil 83), Tecl (Bakos 87).
Bayern: Neuer - Rafinha, Van Buyten, Contento, Alaba, Lahm, Gotze (Weiser 87), Schweinsteiger (Javi Martinez 59), Kroos, Ribery, Muller (Mandzukic 59).

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayern (Q)	4	4	0	0	12	1	12
Man City (Q)	4	3	0	1	11	6	9
CSKA	4	1	0	3	6	12	3
Plzen	4	0	0	4	2	12	0

Sep 17	Bayern Munich v CSKA Moscow	3-0
	Viktoria Plzen v Manchester City	0-3
Oct 2	CSKA Moscow v Viktoria Plzen	3-2
	Manchester City v Bayern Munich	1-3
Oct 23	Bayern Munich v Viktoria Plzen	5-0
	CSKA Moscow v Manchester City	1-2
Nov 5	Manchester City v CSKA Moscow	5-2
	Viktoria Plzen v Bayern Munich	0-1
Nov 27	CSKA Moscow v Bayern Munich	
	Manchester City v Viktoria Plzen	
Dec 10	Bayern Munich v Manchester City	
	Viktoria Plzen v CSKA Moscow	

Going strong...Salzburg

ESTONIA

Youngsters win league

Levadia Tallinn secured their eighth Estonian title – and first since 2009 – with two games remaining following a 3-0 win against Infonet. Igor Subbotin, who at 23 is one of the side's oldest players, scored both goals.

"Our clear commitment to play young guys has brought results," says coach Marko Kristal.

"Now we will have to set new targets because these young players are ready to progress."

FAROE ISLANDS

HB's 22nd title

HB Torshavn clinched their 22nd Faroese championship with a game to spare by beating TB Tvoroyri 1-0 with a goal from Christian Mouritsen.

HB, who had led the table since the sixth round of matches, will enter next season's Champions League qualifiers, while league runners-up IF Fuglafjordur and third-place B36 Torshavn join Faroese Cup winners Vikingur in the Europa League.

TB Tvoroyri were relegated, along with 07 Vestur.

Clincher...Mouritsen

Group E

Oct 22
Schalke (Ger) 0
Chelsea (Eng) 3 (Fernando Torres 5, 69, Hazard 87)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 54,442. **Ref:** Kassai (Hun)
Schalke: Hildebrand - Uchida, Howedes, Matip, Aogo, Neustadter, Jones (Kolasinac 71), Clemens, Meyer (Goretzka 78), Draxler, Boateng (Szalai 71).
Chelsea: Cech - Ivanovic, Cahill, Terry, Azpilicueta, Ramires, Lampard, Hazard (Eto'o 88), Oscar (David Luiz 84), Schurrle (Mikel 72), Fernando Torres.

Oct 22
Steaua Bucharest (Rom) 1 (Leandro Tatu 88)
Basle (Swi) 1 (Diaz 48)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 23,899. **Ref:** Jug (Sln)
Steaua: Tatarusanu - Georgievski, Szukala, Gardos, Latovlevici, Bourceanu, Pintilii (Filip 59), Popa, Stanciu (Leandro Tatu 55), Tanase, Piovaccari (Kapetanos 46).
Basle: Sommer - Voser, Schar, Ivanov, Safari (Xhaka 68), Diaz, Die (Ajeti 87), Frei, Salah, Streller (El Nenny 74), Stocker.

Nov 6
Basle 1 (Sio 90+1)
Steaua Bucharest 1 (Piovaccari 17)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 30,704. **Ref:** Benquerenca (Por)
Basle: Sommer - Voser, Schar, Ivanov, Xhaka, Die, Frei (Diaz 78), Salah (D Degen 84), Delgado (Sio 66), Stocker, Streller.
Steaua: Tatarusanu - Georgievski, Szukala, Gardos, Latovlevici, Bourceanu, Pintilii (Filip 46), Popa, Stanciu (Chipciu 62), Tanase, Piovaccari (Kapetanos 76).

Nov 6
Chelsea 3 (Eto'o 31, 54, Ba 83)
Schalke 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 41,194. **Ref:** Moen (Nor)
Chelsea: Cech - Ivanovic, Cahill, Terry, Azpilicueta, Ramires, Mikel, Willian, Oscar (Lampard 81), Schurrle (De Bruyne 78), Eto'o (Ba 77).
Schalke: Hildebrand - Uchida, Howedes, Matip, Aogo, Jones, Neustadter, Draxler (Clemens 62), Boateng (Kolasinac 76), Fuchs (Meyer 67), Szalai.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Chelsea	4	3	0	1	11	2	9
Schalke	4	2	0	2	4	6	6
Basle	4	1	2	1	4	4	5
Steaua	4	0	2	2	2	9	2

Sep 18	Chelsea v Basle	1-2
	Schalke v Steaua Bucharest	3-0
Oct 1	Basle v Schalke	0-1
	Steaua Bucharest v Chelsea	0-4
Oct 22	Schalke v Chelsea	0-3
	Steaua Bucharest v Basle	1-1
Nov 6	Basle v Steaua Bucharest	1-1
	Chelsea v Schalke	3-0
Nov 26	Basle v Chelsea	
	Steaua Bucharest v Schalke	
Dec 11	Chelsea v Steaua Bucharest	
	Schalke v Basle	

Group F

Oct 22
Arsenal (Eng) 1 (Giroud 41)
Borussia Dortmund (Ger) 2 (Mkhitaryan 16, Lewandowski 82)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 60,011. **Ref:** Eriksson (Swe)
Arsenal: Szczesny - Sagna, Mertesacker, Koscielny, Gibbs, Ramsey (Bendtner 86), Arteta, Wilshere (Cazorla 58), Ozil, Rosicky (Gnabry 89), Giroud.
Dortmund: Weidenfeller - Grosskreutz, Subotic, Hummels, Schmelzer, Bender, Sahin, Blaszczykowski (Aubameyang 66), Mkhitaryan (Hofmann 66), Reus (Papastathopoulos 87), Lewandowski.

Oct 22
Marseille (Fra) 1 (A Ayew 86)
Napoli (Ita) 2 (Callejon 42, Zapata 67)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 39,790. **Ref:** Cakir (Tur)
Marseille: Mandanda - Fanni (Abdallah 53), Nkoulou, Diawara, Morel, Romao, Cheyrou, Payet (Thauvin 71), Valbuena, A Ayew, Gignac (J Ayew 77).
Napoli: Reina - Maggio, Fernandez, Albiol, Armero, Behrami, Inler, Callejon, Hamsik (Insigne 83), Mertens (Mesto 76), Higuain (Zapata 58).

Nov 6
Borussia Dortmund 0
Arsenal 1 (Ramsey 62)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 65,829. **Ref:** Kuipers (Hol)
Dortmund: Weidenfeller - Grosskreutz, Subotic, Papastathopoulos, Schmelzer, Bender (Hofmann 75), Sahin, Blaszczykowski (Aubameyang 74), Mkhitaryan, Reus (Schieber 86), Lewandowski.
Arsenal: Szczesny - Sagna, Mertesacker, Koscielny, Gibbs, Ramsey, Arteta, Rosicky (Vermaelen 90+1), Ozil, Cazorla (Monreal 75), Giroud (Bendtner 90).

Nov 6
Napoli 3 (Inler 22, Higuain 24, 75)
Marseille 2 (A Ayew 10, Thauvin 64)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 39,148. **Ref:** Karasev (Rus)
Napoli: Reina - Maggio, Albiol, Fernandez, Armero, Dzemaili (Behrami 90), Inler, Callejon, Pandev (Hamsik 66), Mertens (Insigne 83), Higuain.
Marseille: Mandanda - Abdallah, Nkoulou, Diawara, Morel, Romao (Lemina 83), Cheyrou, Thauvin, Valbuena (Payet 57), A Ayew, J Ayew (Gignac 67).

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arsenal	4	3	0	1	6	3	9
Napoli	4	3	0	1	7	6	9
Dortmund	4	2	0	2	6	4	6
Marseille	4	0	0	4	4	10	0

Sep 18	Marseille v Arsenal	1-2
	Napoli v Borussia Dortmund	2-1
Oct 1	Arsenal v Napoli	2-0
	Borussia Dortmund v Marseille	3-0
Oct 22	Arsenal v Borussia Dortmund	1-2
	Marseille v Napoli	1-2
Nov 6	Borussia Dortmund v Arsenal	0-1
	Napoli v Marseille	3-2
Nov 26	Arsenal v Marseille	
	Borussia Dortmund v Napoli	
Dec 11	Marseille v Borussia Dortmund	
	Napoli v Arsenal	

Group G

Oct 22
Austria Vienna (Aut) 0
Atletico Madrid (Spa) 3 (Raul Garcia 8, Diego Costa 20, 53)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 45,675. **Ref:** Orsato (Ita)
Austria: Lindner - Dilaver, Rogulj, Ortlechner, Suttner, Holland, Mader, Royer (Leovac 85), Stankovic (Kienast 14), Jun (Spiridonovic 75), Hosiner.
Atletico: Courtois - Juanfran, Miranda, Alderweireld, Filipe Luis (Insua 46), Koke, Gabi, Tiago, Arda, Diego Costa (Rodriguez 60), Raul Garcia (Adrian 81).

Oct 22
Porto (Por) 0
Zenit St Petersburg (Rus) 1 (Kerzhakov 86)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 31,109. **Ref:** Tagliavento (Ita)
Porto: Helton - Danilo, Otamendi, Mangala, Alex Sandro, Gonzalez (Ghilas 86), Fernando, Herrera, Josue (Defour 75), Martinez, Lica (Varela 53). *Sent off: Herrera 6min.*
Zenit: Lodygin - Smolnikov (Criscito 80), Neto, Lombaerts, Ansaldi, Shatov, Shirokov (Kerzhakov 73), Fayzulin, Arshavin (Zyryanov 65), Hulk, Danny.

Nov 6
Atletico Madrid 4 (Miranda 11, Raul Garcia 25, Filipe Luis 45, Diego Costa 82)
Austria Vienna 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 29,841. **Ref:** Vad (Hun)
Atletico: Courtois - Juanfran, Miranda, Godin, Filipe Luis, Adrian (Oliver 46), Tiago (Guilavogui 56), Gabi, Koke (Rodriguez 66), Diego Costa, Raul Garcia.
Austria: Lindner - Koch, Ramsebner, Ortlechner, Leovac, Holland, Royer, Mader (Dilaver 68), Simkovic (Hosiner 53), Murg (Suttner 52), Kienast.

Nov 6
Zenit St Petersburg 1 (Hulk 28)
Porto 1 (Gonzalez 23)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 17,786. **Ref:** Hagen (Nor)
Zenit: Lodygin - Ansaldi, Hubocan, Lombaerts, Criscito, Shirokov (Arshavin 67), Witsel (Zyryanov 81), Fayzulin, Shatov, Danny (Kerzhakov 28), Hulk.
Porto: Helton - Danilo, Otamendi, Mangala, Alex Sandro, Fernando, Gonzalez (Ghilas 86), Defour, Josue (Lica 76), Martinez, Varela.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atletico (Q)	4	4	0	0	12	2	12
Zenit	4	1	2	1	3	4	5
Porto	4	1	1	2	3	4	4
Austria	4	0	1	3	0	8	1

Sep 18	Atletico Madrid v Zenit	3-1
	Austria Vienna v Porto	0-1
Oct 1	Porto v Atletico Madrid	1-2
	Zenit v Austria Vienna	0-0
Oct 22	Austria Vienna v Atletico Madrid	0-3
	Porto v Zenit	0-1
Nov 6	Atletico Madrid v Austria Vienna	4-0
	Zenit v Porto	1-1
Nov 26	Porto v Austria Vienna	
	Zenit v Atletico Madrid	
Dec 11	Atletico Madrid v Porto	
	Austria Vienna v Zenit	

Group H

Oct 22
Celtic (Sco) 2 (Forrest pen 43, Kayal 53)
Ajax (Hol) 1 (Schone 90+4)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 58,719. **Ref:** Bebek (Cro)
Celtic: Forster - Lustig (Biton 77), Ambrose, Van Dijk, Izaguirre, Forrest, Kayal (Ledley 71), Mulgrew, Samaras, Pukki (Balde 90+1), Stokes. *Sent off: Biton 88min.*
Ajax: Cillessen - Van Rhijn (Schone 80), Veltman, Denswil, Blind, Poulsen (Boilesen 67), De Jong, Serero, Andersen, Sigthorsson, Fischer (De Sa 72).

Oct 22
Milan (Ita) 1 (Robinho 9)
Barcelona (Spa) 1 (Messi 23)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 74,487. **Ref:** Brych (Ger)
Milan: Amelia - Abate, Zapata, Mexes, Constant, Montolivo, De Jong, Muntari, Birsa (Poli 80), Robinho (Balotelli 64), Kaka (Emanuelson 71).
Barcelona: Valdes - Daniel Alves, Pique, Mascherano, Adriano, Xavi, Busquets, Iniesta, Sanchez (Fabregas 74), Messi, Neymar (Pedro 81).

Nov 6
Ajax 1 (Schone 51)
Celtic 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 59,908. **Ref:** Aytekin (Ger)
Ajax: Cillessen - Van Rhijn, Veltman, Denswil, Boilesen, Klaassen (Poulsen 83), Blind, Serero (Fischer 72), Schone, De Jong, Sigthorsson (Van der Hoorn 90).
Celtic: Forster - Lustig, Ambrose, Van Dijk, Izaguirre, Forrest, Mulgrew, Kayal (Ledley 77), Stokes (Boerrigter 73), Commons (Pukki 81), Samaras.

Nov 6
Barcelona 3 (Messi pen 30, 83, Busquets 40)
Milan 1 (Pique og 45)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 80,517. **Ref:** Mazic (Ser)
Barcelona: Valdes - Daniel Alves, Pique, Mascherano, Adriano, Xavi (Song 88), Busquets, Iniesta (Fabregas 78), Sanchez, Messi, Neymar (Pedro 85).
Milan: Abbiati - Abate, Zapata, Mexes, Emanuelson, Poli (Birsa 74), Montolivo, De Jong, Muntari, Kaka (Matri 84), Robinho (Balotelli 46).

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona (Q)	4	3	1	0	9	2	10
Milan	4	1	2	1	5	5	5
Ajax	4	1	1	2	3	7	4
Celtic	4	1	0	3	2	5	3

Sep 18	Barcelona v Ajax	4-0
	Milan v Celtic	2-0
Oct 1	Ajax v Milan	1-1
	Celtic v Barcelona	0-1
Oct 22	Celtic v Ajax	2-1
	Milan v Barcelona	1-1
Nov 6	Ajax v Celtic	1-0
	Barcelona v Milan	3-1
Nov 26	Ajax v Barcelona	
	Celtic v Milan	
Dec 11	Barcelona v Celtic	
	Milan v Ajax	

Top 2 in each group qualify for 1st knockout round; 3rd-placed teams enter Europa League at 1st knockout round stage

EUROPA LEAGUE

Group A

Oct 24: Swansea City (Wal) 1 Kuban Krasnodar (Rus) 1; Valencia (Spa) 5 St Gallen (Swi) 1.
Nov 7: Kuban Krasnodar 1 Swansea City 1; St Gallen 2 Valencia 3.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Valencia (Q)	4	3	0	1	10	6	9
Swansea	4	2	2	0	6	2	8
St Gallen	4	1	0	3	5	9	3
Kuban	4	0	2	2	2	6	2

Group B

Oct 24: Chornomorets (Ukr) 0 Ludogorets (Bul) 1; Dinamo Zagreb (Cro) 0 PSV Eindhoven (Hol) 0.
Nov 7: Ludogorets 1 Chornomorets 1; PSV Eindhoven 2 Dinamo Zagreb 0.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ludogorets (Q)	4	3	1	0	7	1	10
PSV	4	2	1	1	4	2	7
Chornomorets	4	1	1	2	3	5	4
Dinamo Zag'b	4	0	1	3	1	7	1

FRANCE

Huge deal for PSG

Paris Saint-Germain have agreed a sponsorship deal with the Qatar Tourism Authority worth a reported €150-200million a season.

ITALY

Inter taken over

Internazionale became only the second side in Serie A – after Roma – to have a non-Italian majority shareholder following Indonesian businessman Erick Thohir's purchase of a 70 per cent stake in the club.

The 43-year-old Thohir also owns MLS side DC United, as well as the NBA basketball team Philadelphia 76ers.

Massimo Moratti will remain Inter president.

Inter owner...Thohir

KAZAKHSTAN

Last-gasp title win

A last-minute equaliser from 18-year-old sub Abat Aimbetov earned Aktobe a 2-2 draw with Ordabasy Shymkent on the final day of the campaign and secured their fifth Kazakh Premier League title.

Starting the day three points ahead of Astana, Vladimir Mukhanov's side only needed a point to clinch the championship. But after Yuri Logvinenko had cancelled out Roman Paholyuk's 31st-minute opener, Aktobe looked to be heading for a play-off after Evgeni Levin restored Ordabasy's lead. "I am crazy with happiness," said Aimbetov after his title-winning intervention.

Akzhayik Uralsk and Vostok were relegated.

Group C

Oct 24: Elfsborg (Swe) 1 Esbjerg (Den) 2; Salzburg (Aut) 2 Standard Liege (Blg) 1.
Nov 7: Esbjerg 1 Elfsborg 0; Standard Liege 1 Salzburg 3.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP C	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Salzburg (Q)	4	4	0	0	11	3	12
Esbjerg (Q)	4	3	0	1	6	4	9
Standard	4	0	1	3	4	8	1
Elfsborg	4	0	1	3	2	8	1

Group D

Oct 24: Wigan Athletic (Eng) 1 Rubin Kazan (Rus) 1; Zulte Waregem (Blg) 1 Maribor (Sln) 3.
Nov 7: Maribor 0 Zulte Waregem 1; Rubin Kazan 1 Wigan Athletic 0.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP D	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rubin (Q)	4	3	1	0	11	3	10
Wigan	4	1	2	1	4	3	5
Z Waregem	4	1	1	2	2	7	4
Maribor	4	1	0	3	6	10	3

Group E

Oct 24: Fiorentina (Ita) 3 Pandurii (Rom) 0; Pacos de Ferreira (Por) 0 Dnipro (Ukr) 2.
Nov 7: Dnipro 2 Pacos de Ferreira 0; Pandurii 1 Fiorentina 2.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP E	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fiorentina (Q)	4	4	0	0	10	2	12
Dnipro (Q)	4	3	0	1	6	2	9
Pandurii	4	0	1	3	2	7	1
Pacos Ferreira	4	0	1	3	1	8	1

Group F

Oct 24: Bordeaux (Fra) 2 APOEL (Cyp) 1; Eintracht Frankfurt (Ger) 2 Maccabi Tel Aviv (Isr) 0.
Nov 7: APOEL 2 Bordeaux 1; Maccabi Tel Aviv 4 Eintracht Frankfurt 2.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP F	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Eintracht	4	3	0	1	10	4	9
M Tel Aviv	4	2	1	1	6	5	7
APOEL	4	1	1	2	3	6	4
Bordeaux	4	1	0	3	4	8	3

Group G

Oct 24: Dynamo Kiev (Ukr) 3 Thun (Swi) 0; Genk (Blg) 1 Rapid Vienna (Aut) 1.
Nov 7: Rapid Vienna 2 Genk 2; Thun 0 Dynamo Kiev 2.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP G	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Genk	4	2	2	0	6	4	8
Dynamo Kiev	4	2	1	1	7	3	7
Thun	4	1	0	3	2	7	3
Rapid	4	0	3	1	5	6	3

Group H

Oct 24: Freiburg (Ger) 1 Estoril (Por) 1; Slovan Liberec (CzR) 1 Sevilla (Spa) 1.
Nov 7: Estoril 0 Freiburg 0; Sevilla 1 Slovan Liberec 1.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP H	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sevilla	4	2	2	0	6	3	8
Liberec	4	1	3	0	6	5	6
Freiburg	4	0	3	1	3	5	3
Estoril	4	0	2	2	3	5	2

Group I

Oct 24: Betis (Spa) 1 Vitoria Guimaraes (Por) 0; Lyon (Fra) 1 Rijeka (Cro) 0.
Nov 7: Rijeka 1 Lyon 1; Vitoria Guimaraes 0 Betis 1.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP I	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Betis	4	2	2	0	3	1	8
Lyon	4	1	3	0	3	2	6
Guimaraes	4	1	1	2	5	3	4
Rijeka	4	0	2	2	2	7	2

Group J

Oct 24: Apollon (Cyp) 0 Lazio (Ita) 0; Trabzonspor (Tur) 2 Legia Warsaw (Pol) 0.
Nov 7: Lazio 2 Apollon 1; Legia Warsaw 0 Trabzonspor 2.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP J	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Trabzonspor	4	3	1	0	9	4	10
Lazio	4	2	2	0	6	4	8
Apollon	4	1	1	2	3	4	4
Legia	4	0	0	4	0	6	0

Group K

Oct 24: Anzhi Makhachkala (Rus) 1 Tromso (Nor) 0; Sheriff (Mol) 0 Tottenham Hotspur (Eng) 2.
Nov 7: Tottenham Hotspur 2 Sheriff 1; Tromso 0 Anzhi Makhachkala 1.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP K	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tottenham (Q)	4	4	0	0	9	1	12
Anzhi	4	2	1	1	2	2	7
Sheriff	4	0	2	2	2	5	2
Tromso	4	0	1	3	1	6	1

Group L

Oct 24: PAOK Salonika (Gre) 3 Maccabi Haifa (Isr) 2; Shakhter Karagandy (Kaz) 1 AZ Alkmaar (Hol) 1.
Nov 7: AZ Alkmaar 1 Shakhter Karagandy 0; Maccabi Haifa 0 PAOK Salonika 0.

EUROPA LEAGUE – GROUP L	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PAOK	4	2	2	0	6	4	8
AZ	4	2	2	0	4	2	8
M Haifa	4	0	2	2	4	6	2
Shakhter	4	0	2	2	4	6	2

Remaining matchdays:
Nov 28, Dec 12

Top 2 in each group qualify for 1st knockout round, along with the 8 3rd-placed teams from the Champions League group stage

AUSTRIA

Oct 19: Salzburg 6 Wacker 0; Wolfsberger 1 Wiener Neustadt 1; Ried 1 Austria 1; Admira 0 Grodig 4.
Oct 20: Rapid 2 Sturm 2.
Oct 26: Wacker 1 Wolfsberger 2; Wiener Neustadt 3 Ried 3; Sturm 0 Admira 2.
Oct 27: Austria 0 Rapid 1; Grodig 0 Salzburg 3.
Nov 2: Rapid 4 Admira 2; Wolfsberger 1 Grodig 1; Ried 4 Wacker 0; Salzburg 1 Sturm 0.
Nov 3: Wiener Neustadt 0 Austria 3.

AUSTRIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Salzburg	14	10	4	0	45	10	34
Ried	14	6	6	2	28	21	24
Rapid	14	6	5	3	26	16	23
Grodig	14	6	3	5	31	28	21
Austria	14	5	4	5	25	19	19
Sturm	14	4	4	6	18	22	16
Wolfsberger	14	3	6	5	23	27	15
W Neustadt	14	3	5	6	20	38	14
Wacker	14	1	7	6	17	33	10
Admira[1]	14	3	2	9	15	34	3

36-round season (9x4); bottom team will be relegated
[1]8pts deducted for breaching licensing regulations

BELGIUM

Regular season

Oct 18: Mons 0 Anderlecht 2.
Oct 19: Cercle Brugge 1 Zulte Waregem 1; Lokeren 2 Gent 2; OH Leuven 4 Waasland-Beveren 2; Oostende 0 Mechelen 3; Genk 4 Lierse 0.
Oct 20: Standard 2 Charleroi 2; Kortrijk 4 Club Brugge 1.
Oct 25: Gent 1 Cercle Brugge 1.
Oct 26: Mechelen 4 OH Leuven 2; Lierse 0 Oostende 2; Mons 0 Kortrijk 1; Waasland-Beveren 0 Lokeren 2.
Oct 27: Club Brugge 0 Genk 2; Anderlecht 1 Standard 1; Zulte Waregem 1 Charleroi 1.
Oct 30: Genk 1 Kortrijk 0; Oostende 0 Anderlecht 3; Charleroi 2 Mechelen 2; Zulte Waregem 3 Gent 2; OH Leuven 2 Mons 2; Lokeren 1 Lierse 0.
Oct 31: Standard 2 Waasland-Beveren 2; Cercle Brugge 2 Club Brugge 0.
Nov 2: Anderlecht 3 OH Leuven 1; Kortrijk 2 Oostende 0; Mechelen 2 Zulte Waregem 2; Lierse 2 Charleroi 1; Mons 2 Genk 3.
Nov 3: Gent 0 Standard 1; Club Brugge 1 Lokeren 0; Waasland-Beveren 0 Cercle Brugge 1.

BELGIUM – REGULAR	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Standard	14	10	3	1	29	9	33
Genk	14	10	2	2	28	12	32
Club Brugge	14	9	2	3	22	14	29
Z Waregem	14	8	5	1	29	21	29
Anderlecht	14	9	1	4	37	17	28
Kortrijk	14	8	1	5	20	14	25
Lokeren	14	7	2	5	25	20	23
Cercle Brugge	14	4	5	5	12	21	17
Mechelen	14	4	4	6	20	23	16
Charleroi	14	3	6	5	17	21	15
Gent	14	3	6	5	16	22	15
Lierse	14	4	2	8	11	23	14
OH Leuven	14	2	5	7	17	26	11
Oostende	14	2	3	9	9	25	9
Waasland-B	14	1	6	7	11	20	9
Mons	14	0	3	11	11	26	3

30-round regular season (15x2); top 6 will form championship group, 7th to 14th will enter Europa League-place play-offs, 15th & 16th (bottom 2) will meet in the relegation play-off series (the loser going down automatically, the winner entering rel/prom play-offs)

CZECH REPUBLIC

Oct 18: Jablonec 1 Mlada Boleslav 1.
Oct 19: Slovacko 4 Liberec 2; Ostrava 1 Znojmo 1; Pribram 3 Olomouc 2; Bohemians 1905 0 Jihlava 0; Plzen 1 Slavia 1.
Oct 20: Sparta 3 Dukla 0.
Oct 21: Brno 3 Teplice 2.
Oct 25: Dukla 1 Ostrava 0; Slavia 1 Bohemians 1905 0.
Oct 26: Znojmo 3 Pribram 0; Olomouc 2 Slovacko 2; Jihlava 3 Jablonec 2.
Oct 27: Mlada Boleslav 5 Brno 2; Teplice 1 Plzen 0.
Oct 28: Liberec 1 Sparta 1.
Nov 1: Plzen 6 Jablonec 1.
Nov 2: Brno 1 Jihlava 0; Pribram 0 Slavia 0; Slovacko 0 Dukla 1; Liberec 0 Znojmo 0; Sparta 2 Teplice 0.
Nov 3: Ostrava 1 Olomouc 1.
Nov 4: Bohemians 1905 1 Mlada Boleslav 1.

CZECH REPUBLIC	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sparta	13	11	2	0	33	7	35
Plzen	13	8	4	1	30	10	28
Teplice	13	8	2	3	33	15	26
Liberec	13	7	3	3	14	15	24
M Boleslav	13	6	5	2	26	13	23
Dukla	13	5	5	3	15	11	20
Olomouc	13	4	4	5	23	25	16
Jablonec	13	4	4	5	21	25	16
Slovacko	13	3	4	6	19	24	13
Brno	13	4	1	8	17	22	13
Ostrava	13	3	4	6	14	27	13
Pribram	13	3	3	7	13	25	12
Boh'ians 1905	13	3	3	7	12	24	12
Slavia	13	3	3	7	10	24	12
Jihlava	13	3	2	8	19	25	11
Znojmo	13	2	5	6	12	19	11

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

DENMARK

Oct 18: AGF 0 Nordsjaelland 1.
Oct 19: Midtjylland 1 Randers 1.
Oct 20: Vestsjaelland 2 Esbjerg 1; Brondby 0 Viborg 0; Copenhagen 3 AaB 0.
Oct 21: SonderjyskE 1 OB 5.
Oct 25: Viborg 4 Vestsjaelland 1.
Oct 26: Nordsjaelland 2 Midtjylland 1.
Oct 27: AaB 2 SonderjyskE 0; Randers 1 Copenhagen 1; OB 0 Brondby 0.
Oct 28: Esbjerg 0 AGF 2.
Nov 1: SonderjyskE 1 Randers 3.
Nov 2: Copenhagen 4 Nordsjaelland 0; AaB 1 OB 0.
Nov 3: AGF 2 Viborg 1; Midtjylland 3 Esbjerg 0.
Nov 4: Vestsjaelland 0 Brondby 2.

DENMARK	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Midtjylland	14	7	6	1	25	13	27
AaB	14	7	3	4	20	16	24
AGF	14	6	3	5	22	21	21
Copenhagen	14	5	5	4	25	18	20
Viborg	14	5	5	4	23	20	20
OB	14	4	6	4	22	19	18
Randers	14	4	6	4	20	21	18
Brondby	14	4	6	4	17	18	18
Esbjerg	14	5	2	7	26	23	17
Vestsjaelland	14	4	5	5	15	21	17
Nordsjaelland	14	4	3	7	13	23	15
SonderjyskE	14	3	2	9	13	28	11

33-round season (11x3); bottom 2 will be relegated

ENGLAND

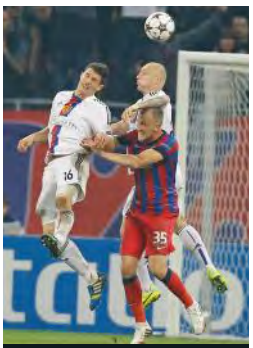
Saturday, October 19

Arsenal 4 (Wilshere 18, Ozil 58, 88, Ramsey 83)
Norwich 1 (Howson 70) Att: 60,009

Chelsea 4 (Hazard 33, 82, Eto'o 66, Oscar 78)
Cardiff 1 (Mutch 10) Att: 41,475

Everton 2 (Mirallas 8, Pienaar 57)
Hull 1 (Sagbo 30) Att: 38,828

Manchester United 1 (Van Persie 26)
Southampton 1 (Lallana 89) Att: 75,220


No joy...Steaua (in stripes)

ROMANIA

Unwanted new record

Steaua Bucharest's 1-1 draw with Basle saw them set a Champions League record by failing to win for a 12th successive home match.

SPAIN

Barca blank

Barcelona failed to make it nine wins out of nine as they were held to a goalless draw by Osasuna – the first Liga game in which they had failed to score since January 2012, ending a run of 64 consecutive games in which they had found the target.

Cristiano Ronaldo's hat-trick in Real Madrid's 7-3 defeat of Sevilla was his 22nd in La Liga, equalling Alfredo Di Stefano's record for the Spanish top flight.

Nil...Barca's Lionel Messi (left)

BRAZIL

Massive support

Third-tier Santa Cruz were watched by 60,000 as they clinched promotion to Serie B. The club from Recife beat Betim 2-1 to win their play-off 3-1 on aggregate. They will be joined in the second tier by city rivals Nautico, who were relegated from the top flight after a 5-0 loss to Atletico Mineiro.

Newcastle 2 (Cabaye 23, Dummett 56)
Liverpool 2 (Gerrard pen 42, Sturridge 72) Att: 51,703

Stoke 0
West Bromwich 0 Att: 25,904

Swansea 4 (Bardsley og 57, De Guzman 58, Bony pen 64, Fletcher og 80)
Sunderland 0 Att: 20,245

West Ham 1 (Vaz Te 58)
Manchester City 3 (Aguero 16, 51, Silva 80) Att: 34,507

Sunday, October 20
Aston Villa 0
Tottenham 2 (Townsend 31, Soldado 69) Att: 35,391

Monday, October 21
Crystal Palace 1 (Mariappa 7)
Fulham 4 (Kasami 19, Sidwell 45, Berbatov 50, Senderos 55) Att: 24,881

Saturday, October 26
Aston Villa 0
Everton 2 (Lukaku 68, Osman 81) Att: 35,154

Crystal Palace 0
Arsenal 2 (Arteta pen 47, Giroud 87) Att: 20,050

Liverpool 4 (Suarez 12, 17, 55, Sturridge 77)
West Bromwich 1 (Morrison pen 66) Att: 44,747

Manchester United 3 (Van Persie 43, Rooney 78, Hernandez 80)
Stoke 2 (Crouch 4, Arnautovic 45) Att: 75,274

Norwich 0
Cardiff 0 Att: 26,846

Southampton 2 (Lambert 20, Rodriguez 42)
Fulham 0 Att: 28,631

Sunday, October 27
Chelsea 2 (Schurrle 33, Fernando Torres 90)
Manchester City 1 (Aguero 49) Att: 41,495

Sunderland 2 (Fletcher 5, Borini 84)
Newcastle 1 (Debuchy 57) Att: 46,313

Swansea 0
West Ham 0 Att: 20,455

Tottenham 1 (Soldado pen 80)
Hull 0 Att: 36,080

Saturday, November 2
Arsenal 2 (Cazorla 19, Ramsey 59)
Liverpool 0 Att: 60,042

Fulham 1 (Kacaniklic 65)
Manchester United 3 (Valencia 9, Van Persie 20, Rooney 22) Att: 25,700

Hull 1 (Cuellar og 25)
Sunderland 0 Att: 24,677

Manchester City 7 (Johnson og 16, Silva 20, Nastasic 25, Negredo 36, Toure 60, Aguero 71, Dzeko 86)
Norwich 0 Att: 47,066

Newcastle 2 (Gouffran 68, Remy 89)
Chelsea 0 Att: 51,674

Stoke 1 (Begovic 1)
Southampton 1 (Rodriguez 42) Att: 26,053

West Bromwich 2 (Berahino 44, McAuley 83)
Crystal Palace 0 Att: 26,397

West Ham 0
Aston Villa 0 Att: 34,977

Sunday, November 3
Cardiff 1 (Caulker 62)
Swansea 0 Att: 27,463

Everton 0
Tottenham 0 Att: 38,378

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arsenal	10	8	1	1	22	9	25
Chelsea	10	6	2	2	16	8	20
Liverpool	10	6	2	2	17	10	20
Tottenham	10	6	2	2	9	5	20
Man City	10	6	1	3	28	11	19
Southampton	10	5	4	1	11	4	19
Everton	10	5	4	1	14	10	19
Man United	10	5	2	3	17	13	17
Newcastle	10	4	2	4	14	16	14
Hull	10	4	2	4	8	10	14
West Brom	10	3	4	3	10	10	13
Cardiff	10	3	3	4	9	13	12
Swansea	10	3	2	5	12	12	11
Aston Villa	10	3	2	5	9	12	11
West Ham	10	2	4	4	8	8	10
Fulham	10	3	1	6	10	15	10
Stoke	10	2	3	5	7	11	9
Norwich	10	2	2	6	6	20	8
Sunderland	10	1	1	8	7	22	4
Crystal Palace	10	1	0	9	6	21	3

38-round season (19x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

Leading goalscorers

8 Sergio Aguero (Manchester City)
8 Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool)
6 Aaron Ramsey (Arsenal)
6 Loic Remy (Newcastle)
6 Luis Suarez (Liverpool)
6 Robin Van Persie (Manchester United)

FAROE ISLANDS

FAROE ISLANDS – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
HB (C)	27	16	6	5	68	34	54
IF	27	14	7	6	55	48	49
B36	27	12	10	5	48	35	46
NSI	27	13	6	8	54	47	45
EB/Streymur	27	12	5	10	55	36	41
Vikingur	27	12	5	10	41	42	41
AB	27	9	4	14	36	48	31
KI	27	6	10	11	54	55	28
TB (R)	27	5	8	14	27	48	23
07 Vestur (R)	27	3	5	19	25	70	14

FINLAND

FINLAND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
HJK (C)	33	22	7	4	78	25	73
Honka	33	18	7	8	51	37	61
VPS	33	14	9	10	41	39	51
Mariehamn	33	14	7	12	57	62	49
Lahti	33	15	3	15	47	49	48
MyPa	33	14	5	14	42	37	47
KuPS	33	11	8	14	43	42	41
TPS	33	10	11	12	42	46	41
Inter	33	9	13	11	31	38	40
Jaro	33	9	10	14	41	50	37
RoPS	33	8	10	15	25	36	34
JJK (R)	33	4	10	19	27	64	22

FRANCE

Friday, October 18
Nice 1 (Cvitanich 40)
Marseille 0 Att: 31,634

Reims 1 (Oniangue 59)
Toulouse 2 (Trejo 42, Braithwaite pen 88) Att: 13,102

Saturday, October 19
AC Ajaccio 0
Nantes 1 (Bedoya 87) Att: 6,460

Evian TG 1 (Benezet 25)
Guingamp 2 (Giresse 74, Douniama 78) Att: 8,620

Montpellier 0
Lille 1 (Souare 4) Att: 13,490

Paris Saint-Germain 4 (Ibrahimovic 10, 13, Cavani 62, pen 89)
Bastia 0 Att: 45,802

Rennes 2 (Kadir 7, 50)
Valenciennes 2 (Le Tallec 65, Da Silva 73) Att: 16,855

Sunday, October 20
Lyon 1 (Briand 90+1)
Bordeaux 1 (Obraniak 62) Att: 36,774

Saint-Etienne 3 (Clerc 7, Corgnet 14, Gradel 72)
Lorient 2 (Jouffre 38, Aboubakar 86) Att: 31,359

Sochaux 2 (Bakambu 57, Lopy 69)
Monaco 2 (Ferreira Carrasco 5, 10) Att: 15,041

Friday, October 25
Nantes 0
Lille 1 (Roux 41) Att: 32,289

Saturday, October 26
Bastia 1 (Squillaci 36)
Nice 0 Att: 14,607

Guingamp 2 (Beauvue 86, Diallo 90)
AC Ajaccio 1 (Andre 41) Att: 14,881

Lorient 2 (Aboubakar 17, Jouffre 55)
Sochaux 1 (Bakambu 90) Att: 15,093

Marseille 2 (Thauvin 56, Gignac 86)
Reims 3 (Ayite 34, Albaek 37, Oniangue 90) Att: 40,532

Toulouse 0
Rennes 5 (Alessandrini 25, Bakayoko 34, Kadir 45, Nelson Oliveira 63, 83) Att: 11,023

Valenciennes 0
Evian TG 1 (Sougou 82) Att: 13,370

Sunday, October 27
Bordeaux 2 (Diabate 75, Obraniak 90+1)
Montpellier 0 Att: 15,972

Monaco 2 (Obbadi 28, Falcao 36)
Lyon 1 (Gomis 62) Att: 11,352

Saint-Etienne 2 (Corgnet 18, Hamouma 51)
Paris Saint-Germain 2 (Cavani 68, Matuidi 90+4) Att: 32,807

Friday, November 1
Paris Saint-Germain 4 (Lucas Moura 3, Menez 39, Cavani 43, 81)
Lorient 0 Att: 44,994

Saturday, November 2
AC Ajaccio 1 (Mater og 32)
Valenciennes 3 (Pujol 27, 90, Dossevi 67) Att: 5,789

Evian TG 2 (Wass 61, Mongongu pen 90)
Toulouse 1 (Aurier 52) Att: 9,216

Lyon 2 (Lacazette 12, Gomis 13)
Guingamp 0 Att: 37,334

Reims 4 (De Preville 24, Krychowiak pen 44, Oniangue 50, Atar 81)
Bastia 2 (Romaric 47, Khazri 90) Att: 13,712

Rennes 1 (Nelson Oliveira 9)
Marseille 1 (J Ayew 16) Att: 26,785

Sochaux 0
Saint-Etienne 0 Att: 12,091

Sunday, November 3
Lille 2 (Roux 27, 72)
Monaco 0 Att: 43,880

Montpellier 1 (Bakar 90+1)
Nantes 1 (Djordjevic 22) Att: 13,224

Nice 1 (Cvitanich pen 77)
Bordeaux 2 (Sertic 31, Obraniak 59) Att: 27,511

FRANCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PSG	12	8	4	0	24	7	28
Lille	12	8	2	2	15	4	26
Monaco	12	7	4	1	20	10	25
Nantes	12	6	2	4	16	10	20
Marseille	12	5	3	4	16	12	18
Reims	12	4	6	2	15	12	18
Saint-Etienne	12	5	3	4	17	15	18
Rennes	12	4	5	3	16	12	17
Bordeaux	12	4	5	3	16	14	17
Guingamp	12	5	2	5	16	14	17
Nice	12	5	2	5	13	13	17
Lyon	12	4	3	5	17	15	15
Bastia	12	4	3	5	14	19	15
Evian TG	12	4	3	5	14	20	15
Toulouse	12	4	3	5	10	18	15
Montpellier	12	2	7	3	15	16	13
Lorient	12	3	1	8	11	23	10
Valenciennes	12	2	2	8	10	19	8
AC Ajaccio	12	1	4	7	8	18	7
Sochaux	12	1	4	7	10	22	7

38-round season (19x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

Leading goalscorers

9 Edinson Cavani (Paris Saint-Germain)
8 Radamel Falcao (Monaco)
7 Dario Cvitanich (Nice)
7 Filip Djordjevic (Nantes)
7 Nelson Oliveira (Rennes)

GERMANY

Friday, October 18
Hoffenheim 1 (Schipplock 88)
Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Sam 26, Kiessling 70) Att: 25,213

Saturday, October 19
Bayern Munich 4 (Robben 50, Muller 52, pen 82, Mandzukic 69)
Mainz 1 (Parker 44) Att: 71,000

Borussia Dortmund 1 (Reus pen 4)
Hanover 0 Att: 80,645

EL SALVADOR

Munoz hits four

Nicolas Munoz equalled a CONCACAF Champions League record with his four goals in Isidro Metapan's 4-0 victory over Los Angeles Galaxy.

Jose Maria Cardenas and Javier Orozco, of Santos and Cruz Azul respectively, had both previously scored four times in one game.

Spot on...Vilar saved three and scored one in the penalty shoot-out

MEXICO

Keeper is the hero

Argentinian goalkeeper Federico Vilar saved three spot-kicks and scored one himself as Morelia beat Atlas on penalties to win the Mexican Cup for the first time in the club's history.

Playing at their Estadio Morelos home, Morelia drew 3-3 in normal time, with Jefferson Montero, Edgar Andrade and Hector Mancilla scoring for the hosts, and Omar Bravo, Vicente Matias Vuoso and Lucas Ayala replying for Atlas. Carlos Morales of Morelia and the visitors' Bravo were both dismissed during the 90 minutes.

Morelia will now face the winners of the clausura cup competition next summer for a place in the 2015 Libertadores Cup.

Eintracht Braunschweig 2 (Ademi 20, Bellarabi 59)
Schalke 3 (Meyer 29, Goretzka 65, Neustadter 90+1) Att: 23,251

Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Kadlec 50)
Nuremberg 1 (Drmic 86) Att: 50,200

Hertha Berlin 1 (Ramos 36)
Monchengladbach 0 Att: 61,539

Werder Bremen 0
Freiburg 0 Att: 40,423

Sunday, October 20

Augsburg 1 (Werner 10)
Wolfsburg 2 (Arnold 35, Luiz Gustavo 42)
Att: 27,554

Hamburg 3 (Lasogga 22, Beister 55, Van der Vaart 67)
Stuttgart 3 (Maxim 3, Gentner 37, Djourou og 64)
Att: 53,167

Friday, October 25

Stuttgart 1 (Ibisevic pen 3)
Nuremberg 1 (Drmic 6) Att: 48,460

Saturday, October 26

Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Rolfes 34, Can 83)
Augsburg 1 (Hahn 24) Att: 27,811

Bayern Munich 3 (Mandzukic 30, 51, Gotze 54)
Hertha Berlin 2 (Ramos 4, Ben Hatira 58)
Att: 71,000

Hanover 1 (Sane 56)
Hoffenheim 4 (Salihovic pen 10, Herdling 18, Roberto Firmino 62, 64) Att: 45,000

Mainz 2 (Okazaki 8, 68)
Eintracht Braunschweig 0 Att: 30,657

Schalke 1 (Meyer 62)
Borussia Dortmund 3 (Aubameyang 14, Sahin 51, Blaszczykowski 74) Att: 61,973

Wolfsburg 3 (Arnold 7, Olic 72, Perisic 89)
Werder Bremen 0 Att: 29,488

Sunday, October 27

Freiburg 0
Hamburg 3 (Beister 37, Lasogga 47, Van der Vaart 63) Att: 24,000

Monchengladbach 4 (Arango 11, Wendt 18, Herrmann 60, Raffael 66)
Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Aigner 15) Att: 53,418

Friday, November 1

Borussia Dortmund 6 (Papastathopoulos 19, Reus 22, Lewandowski 54, 56, 72, Aubameyang 81)
Stuttgart 1 (Haggui 13) Att: 80,645

Saturday, November 2

Eintracht Braunschweig 1 (Kumbela 81)
Bayer Leverkusen 0 Att: 22,720

Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Meier 35)
Wolfsburg 2 (Anderson og 2, Arnold 82)
Att: 44,300

Hamburg 0
Monchengladbach 2 (Kruse 23, 63) Att: 57,000

Hertha Berlin 0
Schalke 2 (Szalai 26, Draxler 90+4) Att: 69,277

Hoffenheim 1 (Sule 34)
Bayern Munich 2 (Mandzukic 39, Muller 75)
Att: 30,150

Nuremberg 0
Freiburg 3 (Klaus 57, Darida 79, Mehmedi 88)
Att: 37,069

Sunday, November 3

Augsburg 2 (Hahn 26, 49)
Mainz 1 (Choupo-Moting pen 59) Att: 28,007

Werder Bremen 3 (Hunt pen 25, Makiadi 38, Garcia 86)
Hanover 2 (Huszti pen 20, Sakai 41) Att: 40,435

GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayern	11	9	2	0	24	7	29
Dortmund	11	9	1	1	31	9	28
Leverkusen	11	8	1	2	22	11	25
M'gladbach	11	6	1	4	25	15	19
Wolfsburg	11	6	0	5	16	13	18
Schalke	11	5	2	4	20	22	17
Hertha	11	4	3	4	17	14	15
Werder	11	4	3	4	12	17	15
Hoffenheim	11	3	4	4	26	25	13
Stuttgart	11	3	4	4	21	20	13
Hanover	11	4	1	6	14	19	13
Mainz	11	4	1	6	16	23	13
Augsburg	11	4	1	6	13	20	13
Hamburg	11	3	3	5	23	24	12
Frankfurt	11	2	4	5	14	20	10
Freiburg	11	1	5	5	12	21	8
Nuremberg	11	0	7	4	11	22	7
Braunschweig	11	2	1	8	8	23	7

34-round season (17x2); bottom 2 will be relegated, 3rd bottom will enter rel/prom play-off

Leading goalscorers

9 Robert Lewandowski (Borussia Dortmund)
8 Mario Mandzukic (Bayern Munich)
7 Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang (Dortmund)
7 Vedad Ibisevic (Stuttgart)
7 Max Kruse (Monchengladbach)
7 Roberto Firmino (Hoffenheim)
7 Sidney Sam (Bayer Leverkusen)

GREECE

Oct 19: Atromitos 3 Levadiakos 0; PAOK 2 Asteras 0; Platanias 1 Olympiakos 4.
Oct 20: Veria 0 Aris 1; Apollon 1 Panetolikos 1; OFI 1 Ergotelis 1; Kalloni 1 Xanthi 5; Panathinaikos 1 Panthrakikos 2.
Oct 21: Giannina 0 Panionios 1.
Oct 26: Xanthi 0 Atromitos 2; Asteras 2 Levadiakos 0; Ergotelis 0 Panathinaikos 2.
Oct 27: Aris 1 Platanias 2; Panthrakikos 0 PAOK 3; Panionios 2 Apollon 1; Veria 2 Giannina 2; Olympiakos 5 OFI 1.
Oct 28: Panetolikos 4 Kalloni 0.
Nov 2: Giannina 1 Platanias 0; PAOK 2 Ergotelis 1; Panathinaikos 0 Olympiakos 1.
Nov 3: Kalloni 3 Panionios 2; Panthrakikos 1 Asteras 1; Levadiakos 2 Xanthi 0; Apollon 0 Veria 0; OFI 2 Aris 0.
Nov 4: Atromitos 1 Panetolikos 1.

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympiakos	10	9	1	0	30	3	28
PAOK	10	8	1	1	20	7	25
Atromitos	10	5	3	2	16	8	18
Panathinaikos	10	4	2	4	11	11	14
Panthrakikos	10	3	5	2	11	12	14
Panetolikos	10	3	5	2	11	6	14
Asteras	10	3	5	2	15	12	14
Giannina	10	4	2	4	11	11	14
Ergotelis	10	3	5	2	11	9	14
Xanthi	10	4	1	5	12	16	13
Kalloni	10	4	0	6	10	17	12
Panionios	10	3	3	4	12	14	12
Levadiakos	10	3	2	5	9	19	11
OFI	10	1	6	3	7	12	9
Apollon	10	2	2	6	11	18	8
Platanias	10	1	5	4	9	15	8
Aris	10	2	2	6	6	14	8
Veria	10	1	4	5	8	16	7

34-round season (17x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

Leading goalscorers

13 Kostas Mitroglou (Olympiakos)
7 Esteban Solari (Xanthi)
5 Pablo De Blasis (Asteras)
5 Javier Saviola (Olympiakos)

HOLLAND

Oct 19: RKC 1 Roda JC 2; Go Ahead Eagles 2 Feyenoord 2; Utrecht 4 NAC 2; Heerenveen 2 Vitesse 3; Twente 1 Ajax 1.
Oct 20: Heracles 1 NEC 1; Zwolle 6 Den Haag 1; Groningen 1 PSV 0; AZ 3 Cambuur 1.
Oct 25: NEC 2 Heerenveen 1.
Oct 26: Den Haag 3 Twente 2; Cambuur 3 Utrecht 1; NAC 5 Go Ahead Eagles 0; Ajax 0 RKC 0.
Oct 27: Roda JC 2 PSV 1; Feyenoord 1 Heracles 2; Zwolle 0 AZ 2; Vitesse 2 Groningen 2.
Nov 1: RKC 3 NAC 0.
Nov 2: Ajax 0 Vitesse 1; AZ 2 Den Haag 0; Twente 2 NEC 2; PSV 1 Zwolle 1.
Nov 3: Groningen 3 Roda JC 3; Cambuur 0 Feyenoord 2; Utrecht 2 Heerenveen 0.

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AZ	12	7	1	4	21	17	22
Vitesse	12	6	3	3	22	17	21
Twente	12	5	5	2	27	11	20
Feyenoord	12	6	2	4	25	19	20
PSV	12	5	4	3	23	12	19
Ajax	12	5	4	3	23	15	19
Zwolle	12	5	4	3	21	13	19
Groningen	12	5	4	3	25	25	19
Roda JC	12	4	5	3	21	24	17
NAC	12	4	3	5	20	17	15
Heerenveen	11	4	3	4	24	23	15
Utrecht	12	4	3	5	16	23	15
Heracles	11	4	2	5	16	19	14
Go Ahead	11	3	4	4	16	28	13
Cambuur	12	3	3	6	11	14	12
Den Haag	11	3	1	7	14	27	10
RKC	12	2	3	7	16	24	9
NEC	12	1	6	5	19	32	9

34-round season (17x2); bottom team will be relegated, 2nd & 3rd bottom will enter rel/prom play-offs

Leading goalscorers

11 Alfred Finnbogason (Heerenveen)
10 Graziano Pelle (Feyenoord)
7 Aron Johannsson (AZ)

ICELAND

ICELAND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
KR (C)	22	17	1	4	50	27	52
FH	22	14	5	3	47	22	47
Stjarnan	22	13	4	5	34	25	43
Breidablik	22	11	6	5	37	27	39
Valur	22	8	9	5	45	31	33
IBV	22	8	5	9	26	28	29
Fylkir	22	7	5	10	33	33	26
Thor	22	6	6	10	31	44	24
Keflavik	22	7	3	12	33	47	24
Fram	22	6	4	12	26	37	22
Vikingur O (R)	22	3	8	11	21	35	17
IA (R)	22	3	2	17	29	56	11

ITALY

Friday, October 18

Roma 2 (Pjanic 45+4, pen 71)
Napoli 0 Att: 45,913

Saturday, October 19

Cagliari 2 (Ibarbo 26, Pinilla 84)
Catania 1 (Bergessio 5) Att: 4,798

Milan 1 (Birsa 22)
Udinese 0 Att: 33,188

Sunday, October 20

Atalanta 2 (Cigarini 41, Denis 84)
Lazio 1 (Perea 53) Att: 12,127

Fiorentina 4 (Rossi pen 66, 76, 80, Joaquin 78)
Juventus 2 (Tevez pen 37, Pogba 40) Att: 38,290

Genoa 2 (Gilardino 22, 50)
Chievo 1 (Bentivoglio 48) Att: 18,563

Livorno 1 (Siligardi 90+2)
Sampdoria 2 (Eder pen 19, Pozzi pen 90+6)
Att: 9,471

Sassuolo 2 (Berardi pen 12, Floro Flores 17)
Bologna 1 (Diamanti pen 34) Att: 12,666

Torino 3 (Farnerud 21, Immobile 53, Bellomo 90)
Internazionale 3 (Guarin 45+1, Palacio 55, 71)
Att: 20,881

Verona 3 (Cacciatore 9, Jorginho pen 61, pen 88)
Parma 2 (Parolo 19, Cassano 25) Att: 19,547

Saturday, October 26

Internazionale 4 (Moras og 9, Palacio 12, Cambiasso 38, Rolando 56)
Verona 2 (Martinho 32, Romulo 71) Att: 56,466

Sampdoria 1 (Mustafi 56)
Atalanta 0 Att: 20,570

Sunday, October 27

Bologna 1 (Crespo 3)
Livorno 0 Att: 21,793

Catania 0
Sassuolo 0 Att: 12,621

Chievo 1 (Cesar 13)
Fiorentina 2 (Cuadrado 45, 64) Att: 7,000

Juventus 2 (Vidal pen 23, Tevez 36)
Genoa 0 Att: 38,767

Lazio 2 (Klose 52, Candreva pen 55)
Cagliari 0 Att: 36,585

League leaders Club America missed out on the CONCACAF Champions League quarter-finals after a 1-0 defeat at home to Costa Rica's Alajuelense put them out of the competition at the group stage.

Mexico's three other participants – Cruz Azul, Tijuana and Toluca – progressed to the last eight, where they all face teams from the USA.

USA

Regular season ends

On the final weekend of the regular season, New York Red Bulls beat Chicago Fire 5-2 to win the Supporters' Shield for the first time.

Brazilian striker Camilo's hat-trick in a 3-0 win for Vancouver Whitecaps over Colorado Rapids gave him 22 goals for the campaign and earned him the Golden Boot, finishing one ahead of Chicago's Mike Magee.

Landon Donovan failed to score in Los Angeles Galaxy's 1-1 draw with Seattle Sounders and therefore remains tied with Jeff Cunningham's record of 134 regular-season goals.

Tim Cahill scored after eight seconds as New York Red Bulls beat Houston Dynamo for the fastest goal in MLS history.

Golden Boot...Camilo scored 22 goals during the MLS regular season

Napoli 2 (Higuain pen 14, pen 32)
Torino 0 Att: 42,209

Parma 3 (Parolo 10, 90+4, Cassano 45+1)
Milan 2 (Matri 61, Silvestre 63) Att: 16,686

Udinese 0
Roma 1 (Bradley 82) Att: 18,904

Tuesday, October 29
Atalanta 1 (Denis 25)
Internazionale 1 (Alvarez 16) Att: 16,511

Wednesday, October 30
Cagliari 0
Bologna 3 (Garics 26, Kone 58, Pazienza 61)
Att: 5,000

Fiorentina 1 (Rossi pen 28)
Napoli 2 (Callejon 12, Mertens 36) Att: 34,482

Genoa 1 (Gilardino 57)
Parma 0 Att: 18,042

Juventus 4 (Vidal 26, Pirlo 34, Tevez 66, Bonucci 71)
Catania 0 Att: 37,469

Livorno 3 (Paulinho 25, Greco 33, Emerson 62)
Torino 3 (Immobile 4, Glik 8, Cerci pen 87)
Att: 9,359

Milan 1 (Kaka 54)
Lazio 1 (Ciani 72) Att: 30,212

Sassuolo 1 (Zaza 25)
Udinese 2 (Di Natale pen 18, Muriel 56) Att: 9,315

Verona 2 (Gomez 51, Toni 78)
Sampdoria 0 Att: 19,371

Thursday, October 31
Roma 1 (Borriello 67)
Chievo 0 Att: 44,156

Saturday, November 2
Milan 0
Fiorentina 2 (Vargas 27, Borja Valero 73)
Att: 44,261

Napoli 2 (Callejon 15, Hamsik 20)
Catania 1 (Castro 26) Att: 47,609

Parma 0
Juventus 1 (Pogba 77) Att: 17,740

Sunday, November 3
Lazio 0
Genoa 2 (Kucka 60, Gilardino pen 72) Att: 33,919

Livorno 1 (Paulinho 11)
Atalanta 0 Att: 8,673

Sampdoria 3 (Pozzi 19, Eder 65, De Silvestri 81)
Sassuolo 4 (Berardi 49, pen 52, pen 88, Floro Flores 63) Att: 20,128

Torino 1 (Cerci 63)
Roma 1 (Strootman 28) Att: 16,276

Udinese 0
Internazionale 3 (Palacio 25, Ranocchia 29, Alvarez 90+1) Att: 10,000

Verona 2 (Toni 8, Jankovic 57)
Cagliari 1 (Conti 90) Att: 18,606

Monday, November 4
Bologna 0
Chievo 0 Att: 14,900

ITALY	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Roma	11	10	1	0	25	2	31
Napoli	11	9	1	1	24	8	28
Juventus	11	9	1	1	23	10	28
Inter	11	6	4	1	27	12	22
Verona	11	7	1	3	22	17	22
Fiorentina	11	6	3	2	22	13	21
Lazio	11	4	3	4	15	15	15
Genoa	11	4	2	5	11	14	14
Atalanta	11	4	1	6	12	14	13
Udinese	11	4	1	6	11	14	13
Milan	11	3	3	5	17	19	12
Torino	11	2	6	3	17	19	12
Parma	11	3	3	5	16	19	12
Livorno	11	3	3	5	13	16	12
Cagliari	11	2	4	5	11	19	10
Bologna	11	2	4	5	13	22	10
Sampdoria	11	2	3	6	12	20	9
Sassuolo	11	2	3	6	12	27	9
Catania	11	1	3	7	7	19	6
Chievo	11	1	2	8	7	18	5

38-round season (19x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

Leading goalscorers

9 Giuseppe Rossi (Fiorentina)
8 Alessio Cerci (Torino)
7 Rodrigo Palacio (Internazionale)
6 Jose Callejon (Napoli)
6 Marek Hamsik (Napoli)
6 Carlos Tevez (Juventus)

KAZAKHSTAN

Division split after 22-round regular season; teams carried forward half the points (rounded up) gained in the regular season and all the rest of their regular-season record

KAZAKHSTAN – CHAMPIONSHIP GROUP – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Aktobe (C)	32	20	6	6	46	22	43
Astana	32	19	5	8	54	35	42
Kairat	32	12	12	8	44	38	33
Shakhter	32	12	7	13	43	45	26
Ordabasy	32	11	8	13	33	37	26
Irtysh	32	12	8	12	41	39	24

KAZAKHSTAN – RELEGATION GROUP – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tobol	32	14	6	12	48	33	35
Atyrau	32	10	11	11	26	38	28
Zhetysu	32	6	17	9	22	32	22
Taraz	32	7	9	16	30	38	21
Vostok[1]	32	6	13	13	20	37	20
Akzhayik (R)	32	7	10	15	37	50	19

[1]*Vostok enter rel/prom play-off*

NORWAY

Oct 18: Sarpsborg 3 Brann 2.
Oct 19: Tromso 4 Viking 3; Start 0 Rosenborg 1.
Oct 20: Honefoss 0 Molde 1; Haugesund 3 Lillestrom 2; Sandnes Ulf 2 Odd 4; Sogndal 1 Valerenga 2; Aalesund 0 Stromsgodset 1.
Oct 25: Viking 1 Aalesund 3.
Oct 26: Valerenga 1 Haugesund 2; Molde 1 R'borg 0.
Oct 27: Lillestrom 3 Tromso 2; Brann 0 Honefoss 0; Odd 2 Sarpsborg 2; Sogndal 2 Sandnes Ulf 1; Stromsgodset 1 Start 0.
Nov 3: Sandnes Ulf 3 Brann 1; Rosenborg 2 Viking 1; Aalesund 1 Valerenga 0; Haugesund 3 Odd 1; Honefoss 3 Sogndal 1; Tromso 0 Stromsgodset 0; Sarpsborg 1 Molde 0; Start 1 Lillestrom 0.

NORWAY	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Stromsgodset	29	18	6	5	62	26	60
Rosenborg	29	17	8	4	47	25	59
Haugesund	29	15	6	8	41	35	51
Aalesund	29	13	7	9	53	43	46
Molde	29	12	8	9	47	37	44
Viking	29	11	10	8	39	35	43
Odd	29	10	7	12	40	37	37
Brann	29	10	6	13	42	45	36
Lillestrom	29	9	9	11	37	41	36
Start	29	9	8	12	42	46	35
Valerenga	29	9	6	14	39	50	33
Sogndal	29	8	9	12	32	46	33
Sandnes Ulf	29	9	6	14	36	56	33
Sarpsborg	29	8	7	14	39	56	31
Tromso	29	7	8	14	40	46	29
Honefoss	29	6	11	12	32	44	29

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated, 3rd bottom will enter rel/prom play-off

POLAND

Regular season

Oct 18: Korona 4 Jagiellonia 1; Gornik 3 Slask 2.
Oct 19: Zawisza 3 Wisla 1; Zaglebie 3 Widzew 1; Lechia 1 Lech 4.
Oct 20: Cracovia 4 Podbeskidzie 2; Legia 4 Piast 1.
Oct 21: Ruch 1 Pogon 1.
Oct 24: Podbeskidzie 0 Ruch 0.
Oct 25: Widzew 1 Cracovia 3; Jagiellonia 0 Gornik 1.
Oct 26: Pogon 3 Korona 2; Piast 0 Lechia 0; Wisla 1 Zaglebie 0.
Oct 27: Slask 1 Zawisza 2; Lech 1 Legia 1.
Oct 28: Gornik 0 Cracovia 1.
Oct 29: Pogon 4 Piast 0; Wisla 3 Widzew 0.
Oct 30: Zaglebie 1 Lechia 3; Korona 1 Ruch 4; Zawisza 3 Legia 1.
Oct 31: Slask 4 Podbeskidzie 0; Jagiellonia 2 Lech 0.
Nov 2: Cracovia 1 Korona 2; Widzew 2 Pogon 1; Legia 2 Zaglebie 0.
Nov 3: Lechia 1 Slask 2; Lech 3 Gornik 1.
Nov 4: Piast 2 Jagiellonia 1; Podbeskidzie 0 Wisla 0.
Nov 5: Ruch 1 Zawisza 0.

POLAND – REGULAR	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Legia	15	10	1	4	34	17	31
Wisla	15	7	7	1	20	8	28
Gornik	15	8	4	3	27	19	28
Pogon	15	7	5	3	24	20	26
Lech	15	6	5	4	19	15	23
Cracovia	15	7	2	6	22	19	23
Ruch	15	5	7	3	18	19	22
Slask	15	5	5	5	23	19	20
Zawisza	15	5	4	6	22	19	19
Lechia	15	4	7	4	20	23	19
Jagiellonia	15	5	3	7	23	22	18
Piast	15	5	3	7	15	25	18
Korona	15	4	3	8	22	28	15
Widzew	15	4	2	9	16	31	14
Zaglebie	15	3	3	9	11	19	12
Podbeskidzie	15	1	7	7	10	23	10

30-round regular season (15x2); top 8 will form championship group, bottom 8 will form relegation group (from which the bottom 2 will go down)

PORTUGAL

Oct 25: Braga 0 Academica 1.
Oct 26: Olhanense 1 Arouca 0; Rio Ave 0 Gil Vicente 1; Setubal 0 Belenenses 0.
Oct 27: Benfica 2 Nacional 0; Porto 3 Sporting 1; Maritimo 1 Estoril 3.
Oct 28: Pacos de Ferreira 1 Guimaraes 3.
Nov 1: Academica 0 Benfica 3.
Nov 2: Belenenses 1 Porto 1; Sporting 3 Maritimo 2.
Nov 3: Arouca 0 Pacos de Ferreira 0; Nacional 0 Olhanense 0; Estoril 0 Setubal 2; Gil Vicente 1 Guimaraes 0; Braga 0 Rio Ave 1.

PORTUGAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Porto	9	7	2	0	19	6	23
Sporting	9	6	2	1	23	9	20
Benfica	9	6	2	1	16	7	20
Gil Vicente	9	5	2	2	11	8	17
Nacional	9	4	2	3	12	9	14
Estoril	9	4	2	3	16	14	14
Rio Ave	9	4	1	4	8	7	13
Guimaraes	9	4	1	4	9	9	13
Braga	9	4	0	5	9	11	12
Belenenses	9	2	3	4	9	12	9
Setubal	9	2	3	4	12	17	9
Olhanense	9	2	3	4	5	10	9
Arouca	9	2	2	5	5	12	8
Academica	9	2	2	5	4	13	8
Maritimo	9	2	1	6	13	19	7
Pacos Ferreira	9	1	2	6	8	16	5

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Oct 10: Cork 5 Shelbourne 3.
Oct 12: Derry 0 Shamrock 0; Drogheda 1 UCD 1; Bohemians 1 Dundalk 1.
Oct 13: Bray 1 Limerick 0; St Patrick's 2 Sligo 0.
Oct 16: Limerick 1 Shelbourne 0.
Oct 18: Dundalk 4 Cork 0; UCD 1 Shamrock 4; St Patrick's 1 Derry 1; Bohemians 0 Bray 1.
Oct 19: Sligo 3 Drogheda 1.
Oct 25: Bray 0 Dundalk 2; Cork 4 St Patrick's 2; Derry 6 Limerick 0; Drogheda 1 Bohemians 0; Shamrock 1 Sligo 2; Shelbourne 1 UCD 2.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
St Patrick's (C)	33	21	8	4	56	20	71
Dundalk	33	21	5	7	55	30	68
Sligo	33	19	9	5	53	22	66
Derry	33	17	5	11	57	39	56
Shamrock	33	13	13	7	43	28	52
Cork	33	13	7	13	47	50	46
Limerick	33	11	9	13	38	46	42
Drogheda	33	8	14	11	44	46	38
UCD	33	8	6	19	45	73	30
Bohemians	33	7	8	18	27	47	29
Bray[1]	33	7	6	20	33	66	27
Shelbourne (R)	33	5	6	22	25	56	21

[1]*Bray stay in top division after winning rel/prom play-off*

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND CUP

Final

Nov 3 - Dublin (Aviva)
Drogheda 2 (O'Conor 14, R Brennan 90+2)
Sligo 3 (North 78, 85, Elding 90+4)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 17,573. **Ref:** Tuite
Sent off: Prendergast (Drogheda) 86min

ROMANIA

Oct 18: Corona 2 Vaslui 1; Steaua 4 Viitorul 0.
Oct 19: Otelul 1 Gaz Metan 1; Petrolul 3 Sageata 0.
Oct 20: Pandurii 6 Botosani 1; Ceahlaul 0 CFR 1; Astra 2 Dinamo 1.
Oct 21: Concordia 1 Brasov 0; Universitatea 1 Poli 2.
Oct 25: Viitorul 1 Corona 0; Vaslui 2 Universitatea 0.
Oct 26: Botosani 1 Petrolul 2; Gaz Metan 3 Ceahlaul 1; CFR 0 Astra 0.
Oct 27: Poli 2 Pandurii 3; Brasov 1 Steaua 2.
Oct 28: Dinamo 2 Concordia 1; Sageata 2 Otelul 1.

CAMEROON

Coton Sport victorious

Coton Sport, who ended the season with a 4-2 victory over Njala Quan, were crowned league champions on the final day of the campaign as closest rivals Les Astres finished two points adrift after drawing 1-1 at home to Unisport.

Five-times former champions Tonnerre were relegated, along with Sable and Panthere du Ndu.

DR CONGO

Inaugural winners

TP Mazembe beat MK Kinshasa 7-0 to win the maiden edition of the DR Congo Super Cup.

Thomas Ulimwengu, Daniel Nii Adjey (twice), Gladson Awako, Richard Kissi Boateng, Herve Ndonga and Mbwana Samata all scored for last season's league champions.

Goalscorer...Samata

EGYPT

Holders in Final

CAF Champions League holders Al Ahly, who have won the title eight times, reached this year's Final with a penalty shoot-out victory over Coton Sport of Cameroon. After drawing 2-2 on aggregate, they converted seven of their eight spot-kicks before Jacques Haman fired over for the visitors.

KENYA

First title in 18 years

Gor Mahia secured their first league title in 18 years with a 1-0 win against Sofapaka. Dan Sserunkuma scored the only goal of the game.

Nov 1: Ceahlaul 2 Sageata 1.
Nov 2: Pandurii 1 Vaslui 2; Corona 1 Steaua 1.
Nov 3: Concordia 0 CFR 0; Astra 3 Gaz Metan 1; Dinamo 2 Brasov 1.
Nov 4: Universitatea 3 Viitorul 1; Petrolul 0 Poli 0; Otelul 2 Botosani 1.

ROMANIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Steaua	11	9	2	0	27	7	29
Astra	12	8	2	2	29	11	26
Petrolul	13	7	5	1	18	9	26
Pandurii	13	7	2	4	30	17	23
Ceahlaul	13	5	5	3	17	12	20
Dinamo	13	5	4	4	20	14	19
Gaz Metan	13	5	4	4	17	16	19
Botosani	13	5	4	4	14	17	19
CFR	13	4	6	3	16	16	18
Poli	13	4	4	5	13	15	16
Sageata	13	4	3	6	12	22	15
Concordia	10	4	2	4	12	14	14
Otelul	13	4	2	7	14	25	14
Brasov	13	2	4	7	13	18	10
Viitorul	12	2	4	6	6	20	10
Vaslui[1]	12	5	2	5	13	11	9
Universitatea	13	1	4	8	10	25	7
Corona	13	1	3	9	8	20	6

34-round season (17x2); bottom 4 will be relegated
[1]8pts deducted because of debts to an agent

RUSSIA

Oct 18: Zenit 2 CSKA 0.
Oct 19: Terek 1 Ural 1; Krasnodar 4 Tom 0.
Oct 20: Anzhi 0 Spartak 1; Rostov 1 Krylia Sovetov 2; Dynamo 3 Kuban 1; Volga 2 Rubin 1.
Oct 21: Lokomotiv 4 Amkar 0.
Oct 25: Krylia Sovetov 2 Volga 2.
Oct 26: Tom 0 Terek 0; Amkar 2 Dynamo 1; Ural 1 Zenit 2; Spartak 2 Rostov 0.
Oct 27: Rubin 1 Lokomotiv 2; CSKA 5 Krasnodar 1.
Oct 28: Kuban 2 Anzhi 0.
Nov 1: Dynamo 1 Tom 0; Volga 1 CSKA 2; Zenit 1 Amkar 1.
Nov 2: Anzhi 0 Ural 1; Krasnodar 1 Kuban 2; Rostov 0 Rubin 0; Spartak 1 Lokomotiv 3.
Nov 4: Terek 0 Krylia Sovetov 1.

RUSSIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zenit	15	11	3	1	35	12	36
Lokomotiv	15	10	3	2	33	13	33
Spartak	15	9	3	3	26	16	30
CSKA	15	8	3	4	19	17	27
Dynamo	15	7	5	3	25	19	26
Krasnodar	15	7	3	5	25	21	24
Amkar	15	6	6	3	18	14	24
Kuban	15	5	5	5	19	20	20
Volga	15	5	2	8	15	25	17
Rostov	15	4	5	6	17	22	17
Krylia Sovetov	15	3	8	4	15	19	17
Rubin	15	3	8	4	17	13	17
Ural	15	2	5	8	13	27	11
Tom	15	2	3	10	9	25	9
Terek	15	1	6	8	7	15	9
Anzhi	15	0	6	9	12	27	6

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated, 3rd & 4th bottom will enter rel/prom play-offs

Leading goalscorers

10 Danny (Zenit)
10 Artem Dzyuba (Rostov)
9 Yura Movsisyan (Spartak)
9 Dame N'Doye (Lokomotiv)

SCOTLAND

Regular season

Oct 19: Hibernian 1 Celtic 1; Kilmarnock 2 Ross County 0; St Mirren 4 St Johnstone 3; Aberdeen 1 Dundee United 0; Motherwell 2 Hearts 1.
Oct 20: Inverness 1 Partick 2.
Oct 26: Dundee United 4 St Mirren 0; Hibernian 0 Aberdeen 2; Kilmarnock 2 Hearts 0.
Oct 27: Partick 1 Celtic 2; St Johnstone 2 Motherwell 0.
Nov 2: Celtic 1 Dundee United 1; Hearts 0 St Johnstone 2; Inverness 2 Kilmarnock 1.
Nov 3: Motherwell 1 Hibernian 0.
Nov 4: Aberdeen 4 Partick 0.

SCOTLAND – REGULAR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	11	8	3	0	23	10	27
Aberdeen	12	7	2	3	18	8	23
Inverness	11	7	1	3	18	11	22
Motherwell	12	7	1	4	14	14	22
St Johnstone	12	5	3	4	19	13	18
Dundee Utd	12	4	5	3	17	9	17
Hibernian	12	4	3	5	9	12	15
Partick	12	3	4	5	11	17	13
Ross County	10	3	1	6	11	19	10
Kilmarnock	12	2	3	7	13	18	9
St Mirren	10	2	2	6	9	20	8
Hearts[1]	12	2	2	8	7	18	-7

33-round regular season (11x3); top 6 will form championship group, bottom 6 will form relegation group (from which the bottom team will go down and the 2nd bottom will enter rel/prom play-offs)
[1]15pts deducted for going into administration

SPAIN

Saturday, October 19

Espanyol 1 (Courtois og 54)
Atletico Madrid 0 Att: 23,500

Osasuna 0
Barcelona 0 Att: 16,123

Real Madrid 2 (Di Maria 46, Cristiano Ronaldo pen 90+1)
Malaga 0 Att: 79,000

Valencia 1 (Pabon 90+3)
Real Sociedad 2 (Griezmann 41, Ruben Pardo 59) Att: 35,000

Sunday, October 20

Almeria 0
Rayo Vallecano 1 (Galvez 78) Att: 9,890

Betis 1 (Jorge Molina 41)
Elche 2 (Manu 29, Fidel 33) Att: 33,000

Granada 0
Getafe 2 (Murillo og 47, Pedro Leon 55) Att: 13,120

Valladolid 2 (Manucho 81, Ebert 84)
Sevilla 2 (Bacca 2, Alberto Moreno 31) Att: 13,706

Monday, October 21

Athletic Bilbao 2 (Mikel Rico 33, Aduriz 35)
Villarreal 0 Att: 36,000

Celta Vigo 0
Levante 1 (Diop 89) Att: 14,636

Friday, October 25

Rayo Vallecano 0
Valladolid 3 (Ebert 31, Javi Guerra 40, Larsson 48) Att: 11,539

Saturday, October 26

Barcelona 2 (Neymar 19, Sanchez 78)
Real Madrid 1 (Jese 90+1) Att: 98,761

Elche 0
Granada 1 (Iturra 26) Att: 24,856

Levante 3 (El Zhar pen 25, 51, Diawara 27)
Espanyol 0 Att: 13,100

Malaga 0
Celta Vigo 5 (Alex Lopez 6, 64, Fernandez 23, Nolito 73, Charles 81) Att: 17,100

Sunday, October 27

Atletico Madrid 5 (Oliver 1, Villa 53, 57, Diego Costa 65, Gabi 90+2)
Betis 0 Att: 42,000

Real Sociedad 3 (Griezmann 13, 50, Jose Angel 55)
Almeria 0 Att: 24,300

Sevilla 2 (Rakitic 55, Jairo 75)
Osasuna 1 (Oriol Riera 87) Att: 35,000

Villarreal 4 (Uche 17, Perez 22, Dos Santos 50, 84)
Valencia 1 (Ricardo Costa 63) Att: 22,539

Monday, October 28

Getafe 0
Athletic Bilbao 1 (Laporte 8) Att: 6,543

Tuesday, October 29

Celta Vigo 0
Barcelona 3 (Sanchez 9, Yoel og 48, Fabregas 54) Att: 26,636

Espanyol 0
Malaga 0 Att: 16,143

Wednesday, October 30

Osasuna 3 (Oier 1, Oriol Riera 13, Roberto Torres 58)
Rayo Vallecano 1 (Galvez 72) Att: 11,109

Real Madrid 7 (Bale 13, 27, Cristiano Ronaldo pen 32, 60, 71, Benzema 53, 80)
Sevilla 3 (Rakitic pen 38, 63, Bacca 40) Att: 65,000

Valencia 1 (Jonas pen 33)
Almeria 2 (Torsiglieri 62, Aleix Vidal 69) Att: 30,000

Valladolid 2 (Larsson 76, Javi Guerra 79)
Real Sociedad 2 (Griezmann 16, 53) Att: 12,700

Thursday, October 31

Athletic Bilbao 2 (Susaeta 55, Aduriz 69)
Elche 2 (Lomban 9, Aaron 47) Att: 36,000

Betis 0
Levante 0 Att: 26,661

Granada 1 (Ighalo 90)
Atletico Madrid 2 (Diego Costa pen 38, Villa pen 78) Att: 16,000

Villarreal 0
Getafe 2 (Marica 6, Sarabia 90+2) Att: 14,000

Friday, November 1

Barcelona 1 (Sanchez 68)
Espanyol 0 Att: 79,977

Saturday, November 2

Almeria 1 (Rodri 39)
Valladolid 0 Att: 9,278

Rayo Vallecano 2 (Jonathan Viera pen 53, pen 55)
Real Madrid 3 (Cristiano Ronaldo 3, 49, Benzema 31) Att: 12,000

Real Sociedad 5 (Ansotegi 33, Inigo Martinez 47, Griezmann 56, Castro 81, Seferovic 88)
Osasuna 0 Att: 30,000

Sevilla 0
Celta Vigo 1 (Alex Lopez 47) Att: 32,000

Sunday, November 3

Atletico Madrid 2 (Villa 32, Diego Costa 41)
Athletic Bilbao 0 Att: 53,000

Getafe 0
Valencia 1 (Pabon 40) Att: 7,000

Levante 0
Granada 1 (Piti 90) Att: 13,500

Malaga 3 (Santa Cruz 13, Eliseu 61, Samuel 90+3)
Betis 2 (Verdu 33, Jordi 63) Att: 19,500

Monday, November 4

Elche 0
Villarreal 1 (Uche 90) Att: 20,020

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	12	11	1	0	34	7	34
Atletico	12	11	0	1	30	8	33
Real Madrid	12	9	1	2	30	16	28
Villarreal	12	7	2	3	20	12	23
Athletic	12	6	2	4	18	17	20
Getafe	12	6	1	5	16	13	19
Sociedad	12	4	5	3	18	12	17
Levante	12	4	5	3	12	15	17
Valencia	12	5	1	6	15	19	16
Espanyol	12	4	3	5	12	15	15
Granada	12	4	2	6	8	12	14
Malaga	12	3	4	5	14	16	13
Elche	12	3	4	5	12	16	13
Sevilla	12	3	4	5	20	25	13
Celta	12	3	3	6	14	16	12
Valladolid	12	2	5	5	14	18	11
Osasuna	12	3	1	8	10	21	10
Betis	12	2	3	7	11	20	9
Almeria	12	2	3	7	14	24	9
Rayo	12	3	0	9	10	30	9

38-round season (19x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

Leading goalscorers

13 Cristiano Ronaldo (Real Madrid)
13 Diego Costa (Atletico Madrid)
8 Lionel Messi (Barcelona)
7 Antoine Griezmann (Real Sociedad)
7 Ivan Rakitic (Sevilla)
7 Alexis Sanchez (Barcelona)

SWEDEN

Oct 19: Gefle 2 Syrianska 0.
Oct 20: Gothenburg 0 Oster 0; Atvidaberg 3 Helsingborg 0; Elfsborg 0 Hacken 0; Malmo 2 Brommapojkarna 1.
Oct 21: Kalmar 1 Djurgarden 2; Halmstad 1 Mjallby 0; AIK 1 Norrkoping 0.
Oct 25: Hacken 1 Halmstad 3.
Oct 26: Brommapojkarna 0 AIK 6.
Oct 27: Djurgarden 1 Gefle 1; Mjallby 2 Gothenburg 1; Helsingborg 2 Kalmar 3; Syrianska 4 Atvidaberg 1.
Oct 28: Norrkoping 1 Oster 1; Elfsborg 0 Malmo 2.
Nov 3: Oster 1 Djurgarden 1; Kalmar 2 Mjallby 1; Gefle 0 Elfsborg 2; AIK 2 Helsingborg 1; Halmstad 2 Brommapojkarna 2; Atvidaberg 2 Hacken 2; Malmo 3 Syrianska 1; Gothenburg 2 Norrkoping 0.

LIBYA

El Badry flees

Al Ahly coach Hossam El Badry has left the club and returned to his native Egypt after a shooting incident at his home in Tripoli.

El Badry, who led Cairo's Al Ahly to victory in the CAF Champions League last year, joined Libya's Al Ahly in May.

With their star player Mohamed Al Maghrabi having been shot in the right arm in a separate incident, and other players receiving threats, Al Ahly temporarily pulled out of the Libyan Premier League, of which they were top after three games.

Gunfire...El Badry was shot at

NIGERIA

Losses let in Pillars

Kano Pillars were crowned league champions for the third time, despite losing 2-0 to Lobi Stars on the final day of the season.

Pillars retained their Premier League title after closest challengers Bayelsa United and El Kanemi Warriors lost games at Gombe United and Enugu Rangers respectively.

Pillars and Enyimba will now enter next year's CAF Champions League, while Bayelsa have qualified for the CAF Confederations Cup along with Nigerian Cup runners-up Warri Wolves, who lost on penalties to Enyimba in the Final.

Five-time league winners Shooting Stars were relegated, along with ABS, Kwara United and Wikki Tourists. They will be replaced by Abia Warriors, Crown, Giwa and Taraba United.

SWEDEN – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Malmo (C)	30	19	6	5	56	30	63
AIK	30	17	7	6	54	32	58
Gothenburg	30	16	6	8	49	31	54
Kalmar	30	14	10	6	35	26	52
Helsingborg	30	14	7	9	61	41	49
Elfsborg	30	12	10	8	49	34	46
Djurgarden	30	12	8	10	38	44	44
Atvidaberg	30	11	7	12	37	37	40
Norrkoping	30	11	6	13	45	47	39
Hacken	30	10	7	13	37	41	37
Mjallby	30	10	6	14	46	47	36
Gefle	30	7	13	10	34	42	34
Bromm'karna	30	8	8	14	33	54	32
Halmstad[1]	30	7	10	13	32	46	31
Oster (R)	30	6	10	14	27	43	28
Syrianska (R)	30	3	5	22	26	64	14

[1]*Halmstad enter rel/prom play-off*

SWITZERLAND

Oct 19: Thun 1 Sion 0; Basle 3 St Gallen 0.
Oct 20: Grasshopper 2 Lausanne 0; Aarau 5 Zurich 1; Lucerne 1 Young Boys 1.
Oct 26: Young Boys 3 Aarau 0; Lausanne 0 Lucerne 1.
Oct 27: Sion 2 Grasshopper 0; St Gallen 0 Thun 0; Zurich 0 Basle 0.
Oct 30: Grasshopper 3 Zurich 1; Aarau 2 St Gallen 2.
Nov 2: Sion 3 Lucerne 0; Aarau 1 Basle 1.
Nov 3: Thun 2 Zurich 1; Lausanne 0 St Gallen 3; Grasshopper 0 Young Boys 1.

SWITZERLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Basle	14	7	6	1	24	12	27
Grasshopper	14	7	4	3	19	11	25
Young Boys	14	7	3	4	24	13	24
St Gallen	14	6	5	3	17	12	23
Lucerne	14	6	4	4	17	19	22
Thun	14	4	6	4	20	19	18
Sion	14	4	5	5	13	13	17
Aarau	14	4	3	7	23	29	15
Zurich	14	4	3	7	15	24	15
Lausanne	14	1	1	12	9	29	4

36-round season (9x4); bottom team will be relegated

TURKEY

Sep 22: Besiktas 0 Galatasaray 3 (awarded).
Oct 19: Elazigspor 0 Eskisehirspor 2; Genclerbirligi 1 Kasimpasa 3; Galatasaray 2 Karabukspor 1.
Oct 20: Gaziantepspor 3 Konyaspor 3; Trabzonspor 0 Sivasspor 0; Kayseri Erciyesspor 1 Fenerbahce 2; Antalyaspor 1 Akhisar 0.
Oct 21: Besiktas 0 Rizespor 0; Bursaspor 2 Kayserispor 0.
Oct 25: Sivasspor 2 Kayseri Erciyesspor 0; Fenerbahce 3 Gaziantepspor 1.
Oct 26: Karabukspor 1 Antalyaspor 1; Elazigspor 1 Genclerbirligi 2; Akhisar 3 Besiktas 3.
Oct 27: Eskisehirspor 4 Rizespor 1; Kayserispor 2 Galatasaray 4; Konyaspor 0 Bursaspor 1.
Oct 28: Kasimpasa 3 Trabzonspor 2.
Nov 1: Galatasaray 2 Konyaspor 1.
Nov 2: Bursaspor 2 Fenerbahce 3; Kayseri Erciyesspor 0 Kasimpasa 3.
Nov 3: Trabzonspor 4 Elazigspor 0; Besiktas 0 Karabukspor 0; Rizespor 0 Akhisar 0.
Nov 4: Genclerbirligi 2 Eskisehirspor 0; Gaziantepspor 0 Sivasspor 4; Antalyaspor 2 Kayserispor 2.

TURKEY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fenerbahce	10	8	1	1	24	11	25
Kasimpasa	10	7	0	3	22	13	21
Sivasspor	10	6	1	3	20	12	19
Galatasaray	10	5	4	1	17	10	19
Besiktas	10	5	3	2	15	10	18
Trabzonspor	10	5	2	3	12	9	17
Eskisehirspor	10	5	1	4	14	9	16
Akhisar	10	4	3	3	13	10	15
Rizespor	10	4	3	3	14	13	15
Antalyaspor	10	3	5	2	11	9	14
Bursaspor	10	4	2	4	10	12	14
Genclerbirligi	10	3	1	6	9	11	10
Karabukspor	10	2	4	4	7	10	10
Konyaspor	10	3	1	6	10	16	10
Gaziantepspor	10	2	2	6	11	21	8
Elazigspor	10	2	1	7	11	26	7
Kayserispor	10	1	3	6	9	18	6
K Erciyesspor	10	1	3	6	6	15	6

34-round season (17x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

UKRAINE

Oct 18: Volyn 0 Hoverla 1.
Oct 19: Illichivets 1 Shakhtar 3; Karpaty 0 Dnipro 4; Vorskla 2 Metalurh Zaporizhya 1.
Oct 20: Zorya 3 Sevastopol 0; Arsenal 0 Dynamo 2; Metalurh D'sk 2 Tavriya 1; Metalist 0 Chornomorets 0.
Oct 26: Metalurh Zaporizhya 0 Metalurh Donetsk 0; Shakhtar 4 Zorya 0; Metalist 2 Karpaty 1.
Oct 27: Sevastopol 2 Volyn 1; Dynamo 1 Illichivets 0; Chornomorets 2 Hoverla 1; Dnipro 2 Vorskla 2.
Nov 1: Volyn 2 Shakhtar 0.
Nov 2: Hoverla 1 Sevastopol 2; Illichivets 1 Tavriya 2.
Nov 3: Vorskla 1 Metalist 1; Metalurh Donetsk 1 Dnipro 1; Zorya 2 Dynamo 0; Karpaty 1 Ch'morets 1.

UKRAINE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Metalist	14	10	4	0	29	9	34
Shakhtar	15	10	2	3	38	14	32
Dnipro	14	9	4	1	28	12	31
Chornomorets	15	8	5	2	16	10	29
Dynamo	15	8	3	4	27	17	27
Vorskla	15	6	7	2	23	20	25
Zorya	15	6	4	5	20	15	22
Sevastopol	15	5	4	6	19	25	19
Metalurh D	15	5	4	6	19	27	19
Karpaty	15	4	5	6	14	20	17
Illichivets	15	5	1	9	11	16	16
Volyn	15	4	4	7	13	22	16
Hoverla	15	4	2	9	14	20	14
Arsenal	13	3	1	9	10	28	10
Metalurh Z	14	1	4	9	14	23	7
Tavriya	14	2	0	12	9	26	6

30-round season (15x2); bottom 2 will be relegated

SOUTH AMERICA

SUDAMERICANA CUP

3rd round

1st legs - Sep 18-26; 2nd legs - Sep 25-Oct 24

Atletico Nacional (Col) v Bahia (Bra)
1-0, 0-1 (agg 1-1, Atletico 4-3 on pens)
Coritiba (Bra) v Itagui (Col)
0-1, 1-2 (agg 1-3)
La Equidad (Col) v Velez Sarsfield (Arg)
1-2, 1-2 (agg 2-4)
Lanus (Arg) v Universidad de Chile (Chl)
4-0, 0-1 (agg 4-1)
LDU Loja (Ecu) v River Plate (Arg)
2-1, 0-2 (agg 2-3)
Libertad (Par) v Sport Recife (Bra)
2-0, 2-1 (agg 4-1)
Ponte Preta (Bra) v Deportivo Pasto (Col)
2-0, 0-1 (agg 2-1)
Sao Paulo (Bra) v Universidad Catolica (Chl)
1-1, 4-3 (agg 5-4)

Quarter-finals

1st legs - Oct 29-31; 2nd legs - Nov 6/7

Lanus v River Plate
0-0, 3-1 (agg 3-1)
Libertad v Itagui
2-0, 0-1 (agg 2-1)
Ponte Preta v Velez Sarsfield
0-0, 2-0 (agg 2-0)
Sao Paulo v Atletico Nacional
3-2, 0-0 (agg 3-2)

Semi-finals draw

Libertad v Lanus
Sao Paulo v Ponte Preta
1st legs - Nov 21; 2nd legs - Nov 28

ARGENTINA

1st tournament

Oct 12: All Boys 0 Colon 0; Rafaela 1 Argentinos 0; Belgrano 0 Quilmes 1; Arsenal 2 San Lorenzo 1.
Oct 13: Velez 1 Olimpo 2; Estudiantes 1 Racing 0; Boca 1 Rosario 1; Newell's 1 River Plate 0.
Oct 14: Tigre 1 Gimnasia 1; Lanus 0 Godoy 1.
Oct 18: Quilmes 1 Rafaela 1; Argentinos 1 Estudiantes 0; Racing 0 Velez 1.
Oct 19: Colon 0 Lanus 3; San Lorenzo 3 All Boys 0.
Oct 20: Tigre 2 Arsenal 1; Gimnasia 2 Olimpo 2; Rosario 2 Newell's 1; River Plate 0 Belgrano 0; Godoy Cruz 2 Boca 2.
Oct 22: Velez 2 Argentinos 0.
Oct 23: All Boys 0 Tigre 0; Rafaela 0 River Plate 0; Lanus 3 San Lorenzo 2.
Oct 25: Belgrano 0 Rosario 1; Newell's 1 Godoy Cruz 1; Boca 2 Colon 0; Arsenal 1 Gimnasia 1.
Oct 28: Estudiantes 1 Quilmes 0; Olimpo 0 Racing 1.
Nov 1: Colon 2 Newell's 2; Arsenal 1 All Boys 1.
Nov 2: Gimnasia 1 Racing 3; Godoy Cruz 1 Belgrano 1; Argentinos 4 Olimpo 0; Rosario 3 Rafaela 2.
Nov 3: San Lorenzo 1 Boca 0; Quilmes 1 Velez 1; River Plate 1 Estudiantes 2; Tigre 2 Lanus 3.

ARGENTINA – 1ST TOURNAMENT

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Newell's	14	8	4	2	21	12	28
San Lorenzo	14	8	2	4	22	12	26
Arsenal	14	6	7	1	16	9	25
Boca	14	7	3	4	18	15	24
Lanus	14	6	4	4	23	12	22
Estudiantes	14	5	7	2	13	9	22
Godoy Cruz	14	5	6	3	13	8	21
Rafaela	14	6	3	5	17	18	21
Rosario	14	6	3	5	16	17	21
Velez	14	5	5	4	17	13	20
Argentinos	14	6	2	6	14	15	20
Gimnasia	14	5	5	4	16	19	20
Belgrano	14	4	5	5	17	15	17
River Plate	14	4	4	6	9	9	16
Tigre	14	4	4	6	12	15	16
Quilmes	14	4	3	7	8	17	15
All Boys	14	2	7	5	10	13	13
Olimpo	14	2	5	7	13	23	11
Racing	14	2	2	10	7	21	8
Colon[1]	14	3	3	8	8	18	6

19-round tournament (19x1); no relegation after 1st tournament

[1]*6pts deducted for failing to pay a transfer fee*

Leading goalscorers

7 Emmanuel Gigliotti (Boca)
6 Julio Furch (Arsenal)
6 Maxi Rodriguez (Newell's)

BRAZIL

Oct 9: Coritiba 1 Santos 0; Gremio 1 Criciuma 2; Ponte Preta 2 Mineiro 0; Bahia 2 Vitoria 0; Cruzeiro 0 Sao Paulo 2; Nautico 1 Botafogo 3; Corinthians 0 Paranaense 0; Vasco 1 Fluminense 0.
Oct 10: Portuguesa 1 Goias 2; Flamengo 2 Internacional 1.
Oct 12: Vitoria 2 Coritiba 1; Fluminense 1 Gremio 1; Santos 2 Ponte Preta 1.
Oct 13: Mineiro 1 Cruzeiro 0; Criciuma 3 Vasco 2; Internacional 4 Nautico 1; Sao Paulo 0 Corinthians 0; Paranaense 1 Portuguesa 0; Goias 3 Bahia 1; Botafogo 2 Flamengo 1.
Oct 16: Cruzeiro 1 Fluminense 0; Santos 0 Internacional 0; Criciuma 1 Portuguesa 3; Ponte Preta 1 Coritiba 0; Sao Paulo 3 Nautico 0; Paranaense 1 Mineiro 0; Flamengo 2 Bahia 1; Gremio 1 Corinthians 0.
Oct 17: Vasco 0 Goias 2; Vitoria 1 Botafogo 0.
Oct 19: Fluminense 1 Ponte Preta 1; Nautico 1 Santos 5; Corinthians 1 Criciuma 0.
Oct 20: Mineiro 1 Flamengo 0; Goias 3 Paranaense 0; Internacional 2 Gremio 2; Bahia 0 Sao Paulo 1; Portuguesa 1 Vitoria 1; Coritiba 2 Cruzeiro 1; Botafogo 2 Vasco 2.
Oct 26: Botafogo 1 Mineiro 0; Cruzeiro 5 Criciuma 3.
Oct 27: Corinthians 1 Santos 1; Bahia 1 Paranaense 1; Internacional 2 Sao Paulo 3; Ponte Preta 2 Vasco 1; Portuguesa 0 Flamengo 0; Fluminense 2 Vitoria 3; Nautico 0 Goias 2; Coritiba 4 Gremio 0.
Nov 2: Vasco 2 Coritiba 1; Sao Paulo 2 Portuguesa 1; Mineiro 5 Nautico 0.
Nov 3: Vitoria 1 Corinthians 1; Gremio 0 Bahia 0; Goias 1 Botafogo 0; Santos 0 Cruzeiro 1; Flamengo 1 Fluminense 0; Criciuma 1 Ponte Preta 1; Paranaense 1 Internacional 0.

BRAZIL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cruzeiro	32	21	5	6	66	29	68
Paranaense	32	15	10	7	49	39	55
Gremio	32	15	9	8	37	30	54
Botafogo	32	15	8	9	45	36	53
Goias	32	14	10	8	41	34	52
Mineiro	32	13	9	10	39	30	48
Vitoria	32	13	9	10	46	45	48
Sao Paulo	32	13	7	12	35	32	46
Santos	32	11	11	10	40	33	44
Flamengo	32	11	11	10	37	36	44
Internacional	32	10	12	10	47	46	42
Corinthians	32	9	15	8	25	20	42
Coritiba	32	10	10	12	38	41	40
Portuguesa	32	10	9	13	46	45	39
Bahia	32	9	11	12	32	39	38
Fluminense	32	9	9	14	35	41	36
Vasco	32	9	9	14	43	52	36
Ponte Preta	32	9	7	16	34	45	34
Criciuma	32	9	6	17	42	57	33
Nautico (R)	32	4	5	23	20	67	17

38-round season (19x2); bottom 4 will be relegated

Leading goalscorers

16 Ederson (Paranaense)
14 Gilberto (Portuguesa)
14 William (Ponte Preta)
13 Fernandao (Bahia)
13 Hernane (Flamengo)
12 Walter (Goias)

AFGHANISTAN

Extra-time success

Shaheen Asmayee beat Simorgh Alborz 3-1 in extra-time to win the Afghan Premier League.

Hashmatullah Barakzai put Shaheen ahead early in the second half of the Final, but missed a chance to double his side's lead when goalkeeper Hassan Koshani saved his penalty. Fayaz Azizi then equalised in the last minute of normal time.

Shaheen regained the lead with a spot-kick from substitute Mahmood Azad before Barakzai wrapped things up with his second goal of the game.

Prolific...Elkeson

CHINA

Three in a row

Guangzhou Evergrande became the first team to win three successive Chinese Super League titles.

Marcello Lippi's side lost only once during the campaign – going down 1-0 away to Tianjin Teda – with Brazilian striker Elkeson finishing the season as the competition top scorer with 24 goals. Runners-up Shandong Luneng finished 11 points adrift, with Beijing Guoan third.

At the other end of the table, last year's runners-up Jiangsu Sainty narrowly avoided the drop, as Qingdao Jonoon and Wuhan Zall were eventually relegated.

KUWAIT

AFC Cup treble

A 2-0 victory over their domestic rivals Al Qadsia saw defending champions Kuwait SC become the

CLUB FOOTBALL

CONCACAF

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group 1

Oct 24: Arabe Unido (Pan) 1 Houston Dynamo (USA) 0.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP 1 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arabe Unido (Q)	4	3	0	1	7	3	9
Houston	4	2	1	1	4	2	7
W C'tion (T&T)	4	0	1	3	1	7	1

Group 2

Oct 23: Kansas City (USA) 0 Olimpia (Hnd) 0.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP 2 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kansas City (Q)	4	2	2	0	5	1	8
Olimpia	4	2	1	1	2	2	7
R Esteli (Nic)	4	0	1	3	1	5	1

Group 3

Oct 22: Herediano (CR) 1 Cruz Azul (Mex) 2.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP 3 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cruz Azul (Q)	4	4	0	0	10	2	12
Herediano	4	2	0	2	11	8	6
Valencia (Hai)	4	0	0	4	4	15	0

Group 4

Oct 22: America (Mex) 0 Alajuelense (CR) 1.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP 4 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Alajuelense (Q)	4	3	0	1	4	1	9
America	4	2	0	2	4	2	6
S Mig'lito (Pan)	4	1	0	3	1	6	3

Group 5

Oct 23: San Jose Earthquakes (USA) 1 Heredia (Gtm) 0.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP 5 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
San Jose (Q)	4	2	0	2	4	2	6
Montreal (Can)	4	2	0	2	3	4	6
Heredia	4	2	0	2	2	3	6

Group 6

Oct 23: Toluca (Mex) 5 Comunicaciones (Gtm) 1.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP 6 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Toluca (Q)	4	4	0	0	15	4	12
Comunicac'es	4	2	0	2	7	7	6
Caled'ia (T&T)	4	0	0	4	2	13	0

Group 7

Oct 23: Victoria (Hnd) 1 Luis Angel Firpo (ESv) 4.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP 7 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tij'na (Mex) (Q)	4	3	1	0	10	2	10
Firpo	4	2	1	1	6	3	7
Victoria	4	0	0	4	4	15	0

Group 8

Oct 24: Isidro Metapan (ESv) 4 Los Angeles (USA) 0.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP 8 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Los Angeles (Q)	4	3	0	1	6	4	9
Metapan	4	1	1	2	6	5	4
Cartagines (CR)	4	1	1	2	4	7	4

Group winners qualified for quarter-finals

Quarter-finals draw

Alajuelense v Arabe Unido
Kansas City v Cruz Azul
Los Angeles Galaxy v Tijuana
San Jose Earthquakes v Toluca
1st legs - Mar 11-13; 2nd legs - Mar 18-20

HAITI

Division split after 22-round regular season

HAITI – CHAMPIONSHIP GROUP – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mirebalais (C)	10	6	4	0	15	4	22
Valencia	10	6	0	4	15	10	18
Racing	10	4	4	2	10	8	16
Petit-Goave	10	2	4	4	6	15	10
Baltimore	10	2	3	5	4	7	9
Aigle Noir	10	1	3	6	9	15	6

HAITI – RELEGATION GROUP – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Don Bosco	10	4	3	3	12	7	15
FICA	10	4	3	3	10	12	15
Victory	10	4	2	4	12	11	14
Tempete	10	3	5	2	9	8	14
America (R)	10	3	3	4	6	7	12
Cavaly (R)	10	3	2	5	4	8	11

MEXICO

Apertura

Regular season

Oct 18: Queretaro 2 Leon 0; Santos 3 Monterrey 2.
Oct 19: Veracruz 1 Morelia 0; Cruz Azul 1 America 1; Tigres 3 Atlante 1; Chiapas 1 Pumas 1.
Oct 20: Toluca 0 Tijuana 0; Puebla 2 Atlas 0; Guadalajara 1 Pachuca 3.
Oct 25: Morelia 1 Guadalajara 1; Tijuana 0 Tigres 0.
Oct 26: America 3 Puebla 1; Pachuca 0 Cruz Azul 0; Monterrey 1 Chiapas 1; Atlante 1 Santos 3; Leon 2 Toluca 2; Atlas 3 Queretaro 1.
Oct 27: Pumas 0 Veracruz 0.
Oct 29: Tigres 1 America 0.
Oct 30: Guadalajara 0 Santos 2.
Nov 1: Queretaro 0 America 0; Tijuana 4 Atlante 1.
Nov 2: Veracruz 0 Monterrey 3; Cruz Azul 1 Morelia 0; Tigres 1 Leon 1; Chiapas 2 Santos 1.
Nov 3: Toluca 1 Atlas 1; Puebla 1 Pachuca 1; Guadalajara 1 Pumas 0.

MEXICO – APERTURA: REGULAR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
America (Q)	16	11	3	2	30	11	36
Santos (Q)	16	9	5	2	30	18	32
Cruz Azul (Q)	16	8	4	4	19	15	28
Leon (Q)	16	7	6	3	20	14	27
Toluca (Q)	16	6	8	2	32	16	26
Chiapas	16	6	7	3	26	23	25
Morelia	16	7	3	6	25	23	24
Queretaro	16	6	5	5	19	19	23
Tigres	16	5	7	4	22	20	22
Tijuana	16	5	6	5	20	18	21
Puebla	16	4	7	5	19	20	19
Veracruz	16	4	7	5	18	22	19
Monterrey	16	4	5	7	20	22	17
Pachuca	16	3	8	5	14	17	17
Atlas	16	1	9	6	18	28	12
Guadalajara	16	2	6	8	15	28	12
Pumas	16	1	7	8	6	19	10
Atlante	16	2	3	11	15	35	9

17-round regular season (17x1); top 8 will enter apertura championship play-offs; no relegation after apertura

PUERTO RICO

Championship play-offs

Final

Sep 29 - Bayamon (Juan Ramon Loubriel)
Bayamon 0
Sevilla 6 (Yahia 3, Matos 32, Phidd 42, Delgado 52, 58, Arroyo 77)
HT: 0-3
Sent off: Guirand (Bayamon) 40min

UNITED STATES

Regular season

Oct 9: Houston 0 Kansas City 0; Seattle 1 Vancouver 4; San Jose 1 Colorado 0.
Oct 12: Montreal 0 New England 1; DC United 1 Philadelphia 1; Dallas 2 Chicago 3.
Oct 13: Portland 1 Seattle 0.
Oct 16: Los Angeles 1 Montreal 0.
Oct 18: Kansas City 1 DC United 0.
Oct 19: Montreal 2 Philadelphia 1; Dallas 2 Seattle 0; Colorado 3 Vancouver 2; New England 3 Columbus 2; Chicago 1 Toronto 0; Portland 0 Salt Lake 0.
Oct 20: Houston 0 New York 3; Los Angeles 0 San Jose 0.
Oct 23: Salt Lake 2 Chivas 1.
Oct 26: Philadelphia 1 Kansas City 2; Toronto 1 Montreal 0; San Jose 2 Dallas 1; Chivas 0 Portland 5.
Oct 27: DC United 1 Houston 2; Columbus 0 New England 1; New York 5 Chicago 2; Vancouver 3 Colorado 0; Seattle 1 Los Angeles 1.

USA – REGULAR: EASTERN CONF'NCE – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
New York (Q)	34	17	8	9	58	41	59
Kansas C (Q)	34	17	7	10	47	30	58
N England (Q)	34	14	9	11	49	38	51
Houston (Q)	34	14	9	11	41	41	51
Montreal (Q)	34	14	7	13	50	49	49
Chicago	34	14	7	13	47	52	49
Philadelphia	34	12	10	12	42	44	46
Columbus	34	12	5	17	42	46	41
Toronto	34	6	11	17	30	47	29
DC United	34	3	7	24	22	59	16

USA – REGULAR: WESTERN CONF'NCE – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portland (Q)	34	14	15	5	54	33	57
Salt Lake (Q)	34	16	8	10	57	41	56
L Angeles (Q)	34	15	8	11	53	38	53
Seattle (Q)	34	15	7	12	42	42	52
Colorado (Q)	34	14	9	11	45	38	51
San Jose	34	14	9	11	35	42	51
Vancouver	34	13	9	12	53	45	48
Dallas	34	11	11	12	48	52	44
Chivas	34	6	8	20	30	67	26

Top 5 in both conferences entered championship play-offs; no relegation from this league

Play-offs round

(single-leg ties between the 4th and 5th placed teams in both conferences)
Oct 30: Seattle 2 Colorado 0.
Oct 31: Houston 3 Montreal 0.

Winners qualified for quarter-finals, to which the top 3 in both conferences qualified automatically

Quarter-finals

1st legs - Nov 2/3; 2nd legs - Nov 6/7
Houston v New York 2-2, 2-1 (aet) (agg 4-3)
Los Angeles v Salt Lake 1-0, 0-2 (aet) (agg 1-2)
New England v Kansas City 2-1, 1-3 (aet) (agg 3-4)
Seattle v Portland 1-2, 2-3 (agg 3-5)

AFRICA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Semi-finals

1st legs - Oct 5/6; 2nd legs - Oct 19/20
Coton Sport (Cam) v Al Ahly (Egy)
1-1, 1-1 (agg 2-2, Al Ahly 7-6 on pens)
Orlando Pirates (SAf) v Esperance (Tun)
0-0, 1-1 (agg 1-1, Orlando Pirates on away goals)

Final

1st leg

Nov 2
Orlando Pirates 1 (Matlaba 90+3)
Al Ahly 1 (Aboutraika 14)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Haimoudi (Alg)
Orlando Pirates: Meyiwa - Jele, Gcaba, Mahamutsa, Matlaba, Segolela, Jali, Manyisa, Klate, Myeni (Makola 76), Bacela (Mbesuma 82).
Al Ahly: Ekramy - Abdel Fadil, Gomaa, Naguib, Moawad, Soliman, Fathy, Ashour, Said (Shedid 90), Aboutraika (Rabia 81), El Zaher (Da Silva 65).

CONFEDERATION CUP

Semi-finals

1st legs - Oct 6; 2nd legs - Oct 19/20
CA Bizertin (Tun) v CS Sfaxien (Tun)
0-0, 0-1 (agg 0-1)
Stade Malien (Mli) v TP Mazembe (DRC)
1-2, 0-1 (agg 1-3)

Final

CS Sfaxien v TP Mazembe
1st leg - Nov 23; 2nd leg - Nov 30

ANGOLA

ANGOLA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kabuscorp (C)	30	22	7	1	53	16	73
Prim'o Agosto	30	17	7	6	43	22	58
Onze Bravos	30	14	10	6	39	22	52
Petro Atletico	30	13	7	10	36	22	46
S Esperanca	30	11	13	6	35	27	46
D'tivo Huila	30	10	12	8	37	32	42
Interclube	30	9	13	8	35	34	40
Rec'vo Libolo	30	10	9	11	33	32	39
Progresso	30	10	8	12	33	33	38
Benfica	30	7	14	9	29	30	35
Rec'vo Caala	30	8	10	12	30	36	34
Prim'o Maio	30	8	8	14	24	39	32
ASA	30	8	8	14	27	38	32
Porcelana (R)	30	8	7	15	26	41	31
Atl Namibe (R)	30	6	8	16	27	60	26
Santos (R)	30	6	5	19	26	49	23

CAMEROON

CAMEROON – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Coton Sport (C)	26	13	7	6	45	20	46
Les Astres	26	13	5	8	29	20	44
Union Douala	26	11	8	7	35	22	41
Unisport	26	10	10	6	17	15	40
Canon Yaounde	26	7	14	5	23	27	35
Njalla Quan	26	8	10	8	29	25	34
Fovu Baham	26	9	7	10	25	23	34
YOSA	26	8	10	8	16	22	34
Renaissance	26	8	8	10	25	33	32
Douala AC	26	8	7	11	26	26	31
New Star	26	6	12	8	23	29	30
Panthere (R)	26	5	14	7	18	27	29
Tonnerre (R)	26	6	8	12	19	30	26
Sable (R)	26	6	8	12	12	23	26

first team to win the AFC Cup three times.

Rogerinho of Brazil and Tunisian striker Issam Jemaa were the champions scorers, with the latter getting his 16th goal of the campaign to make him the competition's top scorer this season.

Bader Al Mutawa of Al Qadsia was named the tournament's most valuable player.

Triumphant...Kuwait SC

TAJIKSTAN

Scorer cut off

Akhtam Khamroqulov scored twice against his former club Vakhsh as Regar-TadAZ won their Tajik Cup semi-final clash. The young striker, however, still lives in the city of Qurgonteppa – where Vakhsh are based – and in revenge for his goals, his hot water and electricity were cut off for five days by people claiming to be from the local authority.

THAILAND

Champions unbeaten

Buriram United won their third league title in five years. Alejandro Menendez's side were unbeaten all season and Spanish striker Carmelo scored 23 goals in just 22 appearances.

NIGERIA

NIGERIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kano Pillars (C)	38	20	3	15	46	40	63
Enyimba	38	18	8	12	32	19	62
Bayelsa Utd	38	19	4	15	42	39	61
El Kanemi W	38	18	6	14	43	33	60
Enugu R'gers	38	18	4	16	47	37	58
Warri Wolves	38	15	10	13	42	33	55
Gombe Utd	38	18	1	19	38	46	55
Sharks	38	15	8	15	35	32	53
Dolphins	38	15	8	15	32	34	53
Kaduna Utd	38	17	2	19	37	45	53
Heartland	38	16	4	18	39	32	52
Sunshine Stars	38	15	7	16	39	35	52
Nasarawa Utd	38	15	7	16	37	42	52
Lobi Stars	38	15	7	16	35	40	52
Nembe City	38	16	4	18	31	47	52
Akwa Utd	38	14	9	15	41	46	51
Kwara Utd (R)	38	13	11	14	32	32	50
ABS (R)	38	14	8	16	35	43	50
Wikki T'rist (R)	38	15	4	19	40	43	49
Shooting S (R)	38	13	7	18	41	46	46

ASIA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Final

1st leg

Oct 26

Seoul (SKo) 2 (Escudero 12, Damjanovic 83)
Guangzhou Evergrande (Chn) 2 (Elkeson 30, Gao Lin 59)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 55,501. **Ref:** Irmatov (Uzb)
Seoul: Kim Yong-dae - Choi Hyo-jin, Kim Jin-kyu, Adilson, Kim Ju-young, Koh Myong-jin, Go Yo-han (Yun Il-lok 77), Ha Dae-sung, Molina, Damjanovic, Escudero.
Guangzhou: Zeng Cheng - Feng Xiaoting, Sun Xiang (Zhao Xuri 87), Kim Young-gwon, Zhang Linpeng, Huang Bowen, Conca, Zheng Zhi, Elkeson, Gao Lin (Rong Hao 75), Muriqui.

AFC CUP

Semi-finals

1st legs - Oct 1/2; 2nd legs - Oct 22

Al Qadsia (Kuw) v Al Faisaly (Jor) 2-1, 1-0 (agg 3-1)
Kuwait SC (Kuw) v East Bengal (Ind) 4-2, 3-0 (agg 7-2)

Final

(single-leg tie)

Nov 2 - Kuwait City (Al Sadaqua Walsalam)

Al Qadsia 0
Kuwait SC 2 (Rogerinho 52, Jemaa 64)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Bashir (Sin)
Al Qadsia: Al Khaldi - Ibrahim, Neda (Al Dhefiri 85), Al Fadhel, Al Qahtani, Keita, Al Sheikh, Al Amer (Aman 63), Al Mutairi (Al Enezi 71), Al Soma, Al Hashan.
Kuwait SC: Al Kandari - Al Taher, Awadh, Al Ateeqi (Al Sanea 78), Baba (Al Shereedah 58), Hakem, Hamoud, Rogerinho, Hammami, Ali, Jemaa (Al Buraiki 65).

AFGHANISTAN

Championship play-offs

Final

Oct 11 - Kabul (AFF)

Shaheen Asmayee 3 (Barakzai 52, 103, Azad pen 93)
Simorgh Alborz 1 (Azizi 89)
Aet. **HT:** 0-0. **90mins:** 1-1. **Att:** 7,000

CHINA

CHINA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gua'zhou E (C)	30	24	5	1	78	18	77
Shandong	30	18	5	7	55	35	59
Beijing Guoan	30	14	9	7	54	31	51
Guizhou Renhe	30	11	11	8	40	41	44
Dalian	30	11	8	11	40	43	41
Gua'zhou R&F	30	11	7	12	45	47	40
Shanghai S'xin	30	11	7	12	31	42	40
Sh'ghai S'ua[1]	30	11	11	8	36	36	38
Sh'ghai SIPG	30	10	7	13	38	35	37
Liaoning	30	8	11	11	35	44	35
Tianjin Teda[1]	30	11	7	12	35	39	34
Hangzhou	30	8	10	12	34	42	34
Jiangsu	30	7	11	12	32	39	32
Changchun	30	8	8	14	29	41	32
Qingdao (R)	30	7	10	13	26	41	31
Wuhan (R)	30	3	7	20	24	58	16

[1]6pts deducted for involvement in match-fixing

JAPAN

Oct 19: Vegalta 2 Nagoya 1; Shimizu 6 Sagan 4; Yokohama 1 Sanfrecce 0; Kawasaki 2 Jubilo 1; Kashiwa 2 Ventforet 0; Kashima 1 Urawa 2; Omiya 0 Oita 1; Tokyo 2 Albirex 0; Cerezo 2 Shonan 1.
Oct 26: Sanfrecce 1 Vegalta 0.
Oct 27: V'foret 1 Tokyo 1; Albirex 3 Shonan 2; Kashima 4 Kawasaki 1; Urawa 2 Kashiwa 1; Jubilo 0 Shimizu 1; Nagoya 2 Omiya 1; Oita 0 Y'hama 1; Sagan 2 Cerezo 0.

JAPAN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yokohama	30	17	8	5	47	26	59
Urawa	30	17	6	7	59	41	57
Sanfrecce	30	17	5	8	47	27	56
Kashima	30	16	5	9	55	46	53
Cerezo	30	13	11	6	44	27	50
Tokyo	30	14	6	10	55	40	48
Kawasaki	30	14	6	10	58	50	48
Vegalta	30	11	11	8	37	30	44
Shimizu	30	13	5	12	44	52	44
Albirex	30	13	4	13	40	41	43
Kashiwa	30	11	8	11	47	53	41
Nagoya	30	11	7	12	42	43	40
Omiya	30	12	3	15	40	45	39
Sagan	30	10	6	14	47	61	36
Ventforet	30	7	10	13	28	40	31
Shonan	30	6	7	17	32	56	25
Jubilo	30	3	11	16	37	50	20
Oita (R)	30	2	7	21	29	60	13

34-round season (17x2); bottom 3 will be relegated

SINGAPORE

Division split after 22-round regular season; teams carried forward full regular-season record

SINGAPORE – CHAMPIONSHIP GROUP – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tampines (C)	27	17	5	5	59	36	56
Home Utd	27	16	3	8	42	25	51
Albirex	27	13	7	7	36	28	46
Balestier	27	12	7	8	38	28	43
Woodlands	27	10	7	10	45	47	37
Tanjong Pagar	27	9	9	9	36	34	36

SINGAPORE – BOTTOM-HALF GROUP – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Warriors	27	9	8	10	38	38	35
Brunei DPMM	27	9	8	10	41	46	35
Geylang Intl	27	8	8	11	31	38	32
Hougang Utd	27	9	3	15	37	41	30
Harimau Muda	27	8	6	13	32	44	30
Young Lions	27	5	3	19	21	51	18

No relegation from this league

THAILAND

THAILAND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Buriram Utd (C)	32	23	9	0	73	23	78
Muangthong	32	21	8	3	61	33	71
Chonburi	32	18	8	6	61	35	62
Suphanburi	32	14	9	9	40	31	51
B'kok Glass	32	14	8	10	40	31	50
Army Utd	32	13	9	10	48	40	48
BEC Tero S'na	32	13	9	10	56	49	48
Osotspa	32	9	12	11	38	43	39
Chainat	32	10	8	14	42	43	38
Police Utd	32	9	11	12	40	37	38
Chiangrai Utd	32	8	10	14	32	45	34
Songkhla Utd	32	7	11	14	30	47	32
Bangkok Utd	32	8	7	17	38	61	31
TOT	32	8	7	17	27	54	31
Ratchaburi	32	6	12	14	31	39	30
Samut S'ram	32	6	12	14	22	41	30
Pattaya Utd (R)	32	9	2	21	39	66	29
Sisaket[1] (R)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

[1]Sisaket were expelled from the league mid-season; results expunged

OCEANIA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Preliminary round

Played in Pago Pago, American Samoa

Oct 15: Lotoha'apai United (Ton) 0 Tupapa Maraerenga (Coo) 3.
Oct 16: Kiwi (Sam) 5 Pago Youth (AmS) 1.
Oct 17: Lotoha'apai United 2 Kiwi 4; Pago Youth 1 Tupapa Maraerenga 11.
Oct 19: Tupapa Maraerenga 0 Kiwi 3.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – PRELIM'RY RND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kiwi (Q)	3	3	0	0	12	3	9
Tupapa M'nga	3	2	0	1	14	4	6
Lotoha'apai[1]	2	0	0	2	2	7	0
Pago Youth[1]	2	0	0	2	2	16	0

As preliminary round winners, Kiwi qualify for the Champions League group stage

[1]The Pago Youth v Lotoha'apai game, scheduled for Oct 19, was cancelled because of poor weather, and was not rescheduled because, by that stage, neither team could win the group and thereby qualify for the Champions League group stage

KEY TO TABLES

(C) = champions
(Q) = qualified for next stage
(R) = relegated

FORTHCOMING FIXTURES

December 4
Sudamericana Cup Final, first leg
December 7 or 8
MLS Cup Final
December 10 and 11
UEFA Champions League last round of group games
December 11
Sudamericana Cup Final, second leg
December 11 to 21
Club World Cup
December 12
Europa League last round of group games

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THE QUALIFIERS BELGIUM

Red Devils on the up

Outsiders finish the qualifying campaign as one of the world's top five teams. By John Chapman

Man of the moment...two-goal hero Lukaku (left) is challenged by Croatia's Vedran Corluka in Zagreb

On a wet and windy October night at Dinamo Zagreb's bleak Maksimir stadium, Belgium beat Croatia 2-1 to qualify for their first major tournament since 2002. The travelling fans partied into the early hours and much was written about the "*Diables Rouges*" emulating and even surpassing the 1986 team that reached the World Cup semi-finals in Mexico.

Marc Wilmots took over as national coach in the summer of 2012, following Georges Leekens' resignation, and found himself in charge of a group of talented players with sufficient experience to become a real force. The team that had failed to reach the 2012 European Championship had an average age of just 23; two years on and Vincent Kompany, Eden Hazard and Axel Witsel are playing regular Champions League football.

Belgium opened their World Cup campaign in Wales and there was little optimism as the team has a history of bad starts. In the event, Wales played with 10 men for 65 minutes and Belgium won comfortably. The second match saw Croatia arrive in Brussels and gain a psychological victory with a 1-1 draw, with the visitors coach at the time, Igor Stimac, dismissive of the hosts, saying they had played exactly as he had expected.

The next match proved to be a turning point. On a wet night at a surprisingly half-full Marakana stadium in Belgrade, Wilmots brought in Kevin De Bruyne – a fringe player under Leekens – into central midfield and he was instrumental in a 3-0 victory as the team showed the first signs of a growing maturity.

Five further straight wins followed and it was on to Zagreb. With Christian Benteke injured, Romelu Lukaku was given the no 9 shirt, and his first-half goals had the drenched visiting support singing lustily. The result made the final group game against Wales of little importance.

Wilmots' men were unbeaten in their group and finished nine points ahead of pre-qualification favourites, Croatia. Throughout the qualifiers, the coach has never been afraid to leave players of the calibre of Hazard, Marouane Fellaini and Mousa Dembele on the bench, and he has seen his side rise to fifth in the FIFA rankings – Belgium's highest-ever position – which means they will now be seeded in Brazil. **WS**

For the record

QUALIFYING CAMPAIGN
GROUP A

07.09.12	Wales (a)	2-0
11.09.12	Croatia (h)	1-1
12.10.12	Serbia (a)	3-0
16.10.12	Scotland (h)	2-0
22.03.13	Macedonia (a)	2-0
26.03.13	Macedonia (h)	1-0
07.06.13	Serbia (h)	2-1
06.09.13	Scotland (a)	2-0
11.10.13	Croatia (a)	2-1
15.10.13	Wales (h)	1-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Belgium	10	8	2	0	18	4	26
Croatia	10	5	2	3	12	9	17
Serbia	10	4	2	4	18	11	14
Scotland	10	3	2	5	8	12	11
Wales	10	3	1	6	9	20	10
Macedonia	10	2	1	7	7	16	7

Players used in qualifiers

TEN MATCHES
Thibaut COURTOIS (900 mins), Axel WITSEL (900 mins), Jan VERTONGHEN (828 mins), Kevin DE BRUYNE (730 mins), Mousa DEMBELE (535 mins)
NINE
Eden HAZARD (607 mins), Kevin MIRALLAS (324 mins)
EIGHT
Toby ALDERWEIRELD (720 mins), Nacer CHADLI (479 mins)
SEVEN
Thomas VERMAELEN (630 mins), Christian BENTEKE (622 mins), Marouane FELLAINI (455 mins)
SIX
Vincent KOMPANY (540 mins)
FIVE
Daniel VAN BUYTEN (432 mins), Dries MERTENS (352 mins)
FOUR
Romelu LUKAKU (210 mins)
THREE
Steven DEFOUR (238 mins)
TWO
Guillaume GILLET (180 mins), Nicolas LOMBAERTS (166 mins), Sebastien POCOGNOLI (104 mins)
ONE
Zakaria BAKKALI (12 mins), Ilombe MBOYO (3 mins)

SCORERS IN QUALIFIERS
FOUR GOALS
Kevin DE BRUYNE
TWO
Christian BENTEKE, Eden HAZARD, Vincent KOMPANY, Romelu LUKAKU, Kevin MIRALLAS
ONE
Steven DEFOUR, Marouane FELLAINI, Guillaume GILLET, Jan VERTONGHEN

The coach

Popular choice...Wilmots

Marc Wilmots
Despite achieving little in short periods in charge of Schalke and Sint-Truiden, he has proved a popular choice with players and fans alike. Dick Advocaat brought him into the national set-up and Wilmots thanked him publicly on qualification.

The key players

Midfield strongman...Witsel kept Belgium ticking over

Axel Witsel
Wilmots' general on the pitch in defensive midfield, he was ever-present throughout the qualifiers. His disciplined approach was a key factor in Belgium's campaign.

Leader...Kompany

Vincent Kompany
Although he missed the last three qualifying games through injury, the Manchester City defender remains a key player. A leader, he is the team's respected captain both on and off the pitch.

Thibaut Courtois
The 21-year-old goalkeeper is undisputable first choice. Along with Witsel, he played every minute of Belgium's 10 qualifying games.

Kevin De Bruyne
Played the game of his life in the 2-0 win away to Serbia. With four goals and four assists in the qualifiers, the Chelsea midfielder was involved in 44 per cent of Belgium's goals.

Goal threat...De Bruyne

The unanswered questions

Missed opportunity...Benteke has yet to win over Wilmots

Who will be the main striker: Benteke or Lukaku?
The former has never impressed for his country while the latter has often been criticised by Wilmots.

Will Wilmots spring a surprise?
The squad is stable but he could bring in a teenager. Possible options include PSV's Zakaria Bakkali, Monaco's Yannick Ferreira-Carrasco or Manchester United's Adnan Januzaj...if he decides to choose Belgium.

Who will play alongside Kompany at centre-back?
Arsenal's Thomas Vermaelen has lost his club place, while Bayern Munich's Daniel Van Buyten often starts on the bench.

Reasons to be cheerful

Seeded in Brazil
Belgium have gone from 71st in the FIFA rankings in July 2007 to a current position of fifth and will be seeded at the finals.

Valuable squad
The summer of 2013 saw Belgium as the third-most valuable team in terms of transfer fees paid, behind Brazil and Portugal.

Good defensive record
Belgium conceded only four goals in their 10 qualifying games, with Courtois making a major contribution.

Safe hands...Courtois

Reasons to be fearful

Untested against the best
The current team has not yet beaten any of the world's top sides, with Croatia their biggest scalp in a competitive match.

Stars on the bench
Several players moved in the summer transfer window and have experienced a lack of playing time at their new clubs.

Worries at full-back
There is a dearth of top-class full-backs in Belgium, with both Toby Alderweireld and Jan Vertonghen happier in central defence.

THE QUALIFIERS COLOMBIA

Long wait is over

Sixteen years after their last appearance, "*Los Cafeteros*" are back in the finals. By Carl Worswick

Comeback...Cuadrado (left) and Armero celebrate the 3-3 draw at home to Chile which clinched qualification

Three presidents, nine national coaches and 16 years later, Colombia will return to the World Cup. Under the leadership of Jose Pekerman, "*Los Cafeteros*" bounced back from a difficult start to breeze into the finals in Brazil with a game to spare.

Scintillating to watch at times, but armed with a pragmatic edge that is forged from the meticulously prepared notebooks of the studious Argentinian and his team of coaching assistants, Colombia will be expected to do well at their first finals since 1998.

Much of the credit for this must go to the 64-year-old coach and the remarkable influence he has had since taking control of the national side less than two years ago.

Back then the team was in a mess. Previous coaches Hernan Dario Gomez and Leonel Alvarez had been sacked within the space of three months and, with just one point from the opening two home games, World Cup dreams were again slipping away.

Dark shadows still loomed heavy from the deeply painful exit suffered at the 1994 World Cup. Heavily fancied but with egos and expectations bloated, the golden generation departed the USA after the first round. The murder of defender Andres Escobar a few days later left an indelible mark on the nation's football conscious.

After the dismissal of Alvarez, Colombia turned to a foreign coach for the first since 1982 – albeit one who had lived in the country and understood the intricacies of its troubled past. Pekerman immediately imposed an iron discipline on the squad. The media was shut out, press conferences were rare and brief, and players unwilling to sacrifice all for the team were ruthlessly removed.

The side that emerged from this catharsis took time to gel, but then embarked on an astonishing run of victories. Colombia racked up convincing back-to-back wins against Uruguay, Chile, Paraguay and Bolivia, and managed a goalless draw away in Argentina.

Pekerman had left big-name players on the sidelines but he created a dynamic balance that was held together by a strong team ethic. "I don't talk of individuals, just the team," was a regular Pekerman response.

In their penultimate qualifier against Chile, Colombia trailed 3-0 with 20 minutes to go but came back to steal the point they needed to edge them over the qualification line. A 2-1 win with 10 men in Paraguay four days later confirmed their place among the top seeds for December's World Cup finals draw.

"This is historic, only the world champions are ranked as top seeds. It's a marvellous achievement," beamed the coach afterwards.

Eight years ago, Pekerman's Argentina were just 10 minutes away from knocking out Germany in the quarter-finals before being turfed out on penalties.

This time around, if the Argentinian can sort out Colombia's creaking defence, his adopted country could be a good outside bet to go even further in the finals. **WS**

For the record

QUALIFYING CAMPAIGN

11.10.11	Bolivia (a)	2-1
12.11.11	Venezuela (h)	1-1
15.11.11	Argentina (h)	1-2
03.06.12	Peru (a)	1-0
10.06.12	Ecuador (a)	0-1
07.09.12	Uruguay (h)	4-0
11.09.12	Chile (a)	3-1
12.10.12	Paraguay (h)	2-0
22.03.13	Bolivia (h)	5-0
27.03.13	Venezuela (a)	0-1
07.06.13	Argentina (a)	0-0
11.06.13	Peru (h)	2-0
06.09.13	Ecuador (h)	1-0
10.09.13	Uruguay (a)	0-2
11.10.13	Chile (h)	3-3
16.10.13	Paraguay (a)	2-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Argentina	16	9	5	2	35	15	32
Colombia	16	9	3	4	27	13	30
Chile	16	9	1	6	29	25	28
Ecuador	16	7	4	5	20	16	25
Uruguay	16	7	4	5	25	25	25
Venezuela	16	5	5	6	14	20	20
Peru	16	4	3	9	17	26	15
Bolivia	16	2	6	8	17	30	12
Paraguay	16	3	3	10	17	31	12

Players used in qualifiers

SIXTEEN MATCHES
David OSPINA (1,440 mins)
FIFTEEN
Pablo ARMERO (1,273 mins), James RODRIGUEZ (1,262 mins)
THIRTEEN
Radamel FALCAO (1,091 mins)
TWELVE
Juan ZUNIGA (1,046 mins), Mario YEPES (1,035 mins), Luis PEREA (972 mins), Carlos SANCHEZ (844 mins)
ELEVEN
Teofilo GUTIERREZ (859 mins), Abel AGUILAR (820 mins), Juan CUADRADO (642 mins)
NINE
Macnelly TORRES (637 mins), Fredy GUARIN (521 mins), Aldo RAMIREZ (261 mins)
SEVEN
Jackson MARTINEZ (314 mins)
FIVE
Edwin VALENCIA (444 mins), Carlos VALDEZ (424 mins), Dorlan PABON (378 mins), Alexander MEJIA (61 mins)
FOUR
Aquivaldo MOSQUERA (360 mins)
THREE
Carlos BACCA (103 mins), Dayro MORENO (58 mins), Carlos QUINTERO (30 mins)
TWO
Gustavo BOLIVAR (180 mins), Stefan MEDINA (135 mins), Cristian ZAPATA (117 mins), Diego ARIAS (103 mins), Elkin SOTO (79 mins), Luis MURIEL (27 mins)
ONE
Gustavo RAMOS (90 mins), Gerardo VALLEJO (90 mins), Juan QUINTERO (24 mins), Diego CHARA (20 mins), Christian MARRUGO (14 mins)

SCORERS IN QUALIFIERS
NINE GOALS
Radamel FALCAO
SIX
Teofilo GUTIERREZ
THREE
James RODRIGUEZ
TWO
Dorlan PABON, Mario YEPES
ONE
Pablo ARMERO, Fredy GUARIN, Macnelly TORRES, Carlos VALDEZ, Juan ZUNIGA

The coach

Rejuvenation...Pekerman

Jose Pekerman

Fastidious in his preparation, the Argentinian has rejuvenated Colombia since taking charge in 2012. He will be hoping to add to the three world youth championships he won when boss of his native Argentina.

The key players

Prolific..but Falcao has never scored with a header for his country

Radamel Falcao

"*El Tigre*" may have begun the campaign against Bolivia on the bench, but he finished it with nine goals – a Colombian qualifying record. Curiously, he is yet to score with a header in national colours.

Revelation...Rodriguez

James Rodriguez

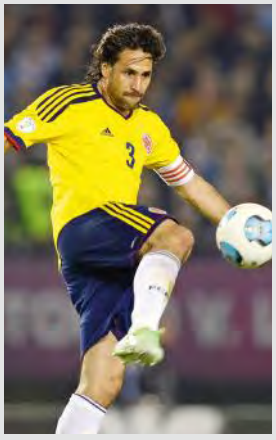
The revelation of the qualifying campaign and the rightful heir to Carlos Valderrama's number 10 shirt. He provides the creative thrust that is central to Colombia's attacking play.

David Ospina

The Nice goalkeeper kept seven clean sheets on the road to Brazil and provided a steadying influence on what was at times a very wobbly back line.

Mario Yepes

What Colombia's 37-year-old central defender and captain lacks in pace, he more than makes up for in leadership and with his astute reading of the game. He will at last be making his finals debut after three previous qualification attempts.



Leadership...Yepes

The unanswered questions

Irreplaceable...Ospina was ever-present on the road to Brazil 2014

What if Ospina is unavailable?

The 25-year-old keeper was the only Colombian to appear in every qualifier, but if he gets injured there is little cover.

Will Pekerman give the kids a chance?

The coach could opt to freshen up his squad with 20-year-olds Juan Quintero, the Porto playmaker who was used sparingly during the qualifiers, and Eder Balanta, a promising River Plate defender who is still awaiting his first call-up.

Who will partner Yepes?

While the veteran captain is assured of his place in the centre of Colombia's defence, Pekerman is yet to decide who to play alongside him.

Reasons to be cheerful

Attackers bristling with talent

Falcao may be the star name and the world's hottest striker, but the squad has an abundance of able deputies with top club-level experience.

Feet on the ground

In 1994 lofty expectations brought Colombia's golden generation crashing to a shock first-round exit. Under Pekerman's regime, such imprudence has long been rooted out.

Well prepared

Colombia qualified with the best away record in South America and should have little trouble adapting to Brazil's different meteorological challenges.

Reasons to be fearful

Going grey at the back

Colombia's centre-backs are old, slow and have shown signs of being woefully exposed when up against the stronger South American sides. Yepes and Perea would have a combined age of 73 at the World Cup finals.

Too many bookings

Yepes picked up seven yellow cards in qualifying – more than any other player. Perea also finished in the top five of the most booked players.

Key players on the sidelines

Rodriguez is currently out of favour at Monaco, while midfield anchor Valencia is struggling with a long-term calf injury and the form of playmaker Torres has slumped since his move to play for Al Shabab in Saudi Arabia.

Slump in form...Torres

THE QUALIFIERS GERMANY

The pressure is on Low to create history

The country expects their team to be successful in South America next summer. By Nick Bidwell

Spoilt for choice...Reus, in action against Austria during September's qualifier, is just one attacking talent at Low's disposal

Tournament winners three times and losing finalists on four other occasions, no country stokes World Cup pressure and expectation like Germany. Just ask Joachim Low, the man charged with the onerous task of keeping the *Nationalmannschaft* on the up and up.

Despite a raft of solid campaigns during his seven years in charge – steering the team to a runners-up spot at Euro 2008, third-place at the 2010 World Cup and the last four of Euro 2012; and all achieved with a stylish, attacking game plan – Low still has to contend with those who see him as a perennial faller at the last hurdle. He will only be truly accepted into Germany's leadership pantheon if he can strike gold next summer.

No matter that a European nation has yet to win a World Cup on South American soil. Or that the likes of Brazil and Argentina will take some stopping in their own backyard. Twenty-three years since their last global crown, the conviction in Germany is that the time is ripe for another dash for World Cup glory.

All the building blocks are in place: the increasingly strong Bundesliga; the recent Champions League domination of Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund; the phenomenal attacking-third talent of Thomas Muller, Marco Reus, Mario Gotze, Mesut Ozil and Julian Draxler; the utter reliability of goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, midfield controller Bastian Schweinsteiger and striker Miroslav Klose; not to mention Germany's time-honoured tournament know-how.

As German federation president Wolfgang Niersbach never tires of saying, Low is "a first-class coach", someone who has restored credibility and mass appeal to the national side. But the *Bundestrainer* has come under particularly heavy fire of late.

He was criticised for being outfoxed by opposite number Cesare Prandelli in Germany's 2-1 loss to Italy in the semi-finals of Euro 2012 and failing to address his side's lack of focus and organisation at the back. Those defensive frailties were exposed in the 4-4 World Cup qualifying draw with Sweden in Berlin, a 4-3 loss to the USA on tour this summer and a 3-3 draw at home to Ecuador in August.

"We are conceding far too many goals," admits Low. "We're looking to stand firm at the back, without playing *catenaccio*, while scoring two or three goals at the other end."

Somehow, some way, Low has to recalibrate his side and strike a better balance between the cavalier and the cautious. **WS**

For the record

QUALIFICATION CAMPAIGN
GROUP C

07.09.12	Faroe Islands (h)	3-0
11.09.12	Austria (a)	2-1
12.10.12	Republic of Ireland (a)	6-1
16.10.12	Sweden (h)	4-4
22.03.13	Kazakhstan (a)	3-0
26.03.13	Kazakhstan (h)	4-1
06.09.13	Austria (h)	3-0
10.09.13	Faroe Islands (a)	3-0
11.10.13	Republic of Ireland (h)	3-0
15.10.13	Sweden (a)	5-3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	10	9	1	0	36	10	28
Sweden	10	6	2	2	19	14	20
Austria	10	5	2	3	20	10	17
Rep of Ireland	10	4	2	4	16	17	14
Kazakhstan	10	1	2	7	6	21	5
Faroe Islands	10	0	1	9	4	29	1

Players used in qualifiers

TEN MATCHES
Manuel NEUER (900 mins), Mesut OZIL (887 mins), Thomas MULLER (802 mins)
NINE
Philipp LAHM (810 mins)
EIGHT
Per MERTESACKER (720 mins), Sami KHEDIRA (658 mins)
SEVEN
Jerome BOATENG (630 mins), Toni KROOS (585 mins), Mario GOTZE (385 mins)
SIX
Marcel SCHMELZER (495 mins), Miroslav KLOSE (472 mins), Marco REUS (468 mins), Andre SCHURRLE (240 mins)
FIVE
Bastian SCHWEINSTEIGER (450 mins), Lukas PODOLSKI (128 mins), Julian DRAXLER (109 mins)
FOUR
Holger BADSTUBER (360 mins)
THREE
Mats HUMMELS (270 mins), Marcell JANSEN (180 mins), Benedikt HOWEDES (151 mins), Max KRUSE (94 mins)
TWO
Ilkay GUNDOGAN (99 mins), Sidney SAM (8 mins)
ONE
Sven BENDER (8 mins)

SCORERS IN QUALIFIERS
EIGHT GOALS
Mesut OZIL
FIVE
Marco REUS
FOUR
Mario GOTZE, Miroslav KLOSE, Thomas MULLER, Andre SCHURRLE
THREE
Toni KROOS
TWO
Per MERTESACKER
ONE
Ilkay GUNDOGAN, Sami KHEDIRA

The coach

Best-ever *Bundestrainer*...Low

Joachim Low

Throughout the *Nationalmannschaft*'s 105-year history, no *Bundestrainer* has a better win percentage than "Jogi", who can boast a 69 per cent success rate. However, after a hat-trick of big tournament near misses, he has to deliver next year.

The key players

Philipp Lahm

Excellent for Bayern Munich this season in a new deep-midfield role, the 30-year-old is likely to remain at right-back for the national team, who rely enormously on his wonderful overlapping, intelligence and leadership qualities. Grittier than his choirboy looks suggest.

Gritty leadership...Lahm

Mesut Ozil

His pride pricked after Real Madrid declared him surplus to requirements and sold him to Arsenal, the gifted playmaker will be hoping he enjoys the same fate as Wesley Sneijder – who, after being forced out of the Bernabeu, went from strength to strength with Internazionale and Holland.

Gifted playmaker...Ozil

Marco Reus

In the post-mortems that followed Germany's semi-final elimination at Euro 2012, a popular school of thought was that the *Nationalmannschaft* would have gone further if Low had shown more faith in this "wizard of the dribble". He has been even more effective since he joined Borussia Dortmund from Borussia Monchengladbach a year ago.

Thomas Muller

Brilliant attacking all-rounder from Bayern Munich who won the Golden Boot at the 2010 World Cup thanks to five goals and three assists. Pacy, incisive and blessed with an uncanny ability to find space, he will run all day for his team but never haphazardly.

Attacking all-rounder...Muller

The unanswered questions

Can Bayern and Dortmund come together for the national cause?

Players from the Bundesliga's big two make up much of Low's squad but are often at daggers drawn when it comes to the national side. Just to pour more oil on the fire, Dortmund coach Jurgen Klopp is angry with Low for publicly criticising two of his players – Mats Hummels and Marcel Schmelzer.

Will there be time for Low to refine a tactical "Plan B" with no conventional striker?

Low likes the increased flexibility that the Spain-like system offers and used it in qualifying against Kazakhstan in March. Gotze played as the "false nine" that night, although the role could just as easily have gone to Reus, Ozil, Muller or Draxler.

Who will be first-choice at centre-back and in defensive midfield?

At the heart of the back four, Per Mertesacker, Jerome Boateng and Hummels may all feature, while usual starters Schweinsteiger and Sami Khedira face stiff competition in midfield from Toni Kroos and Ilkay Gundogan.

Reasons to be cheerful

Creativity and fluidity

Whether taking the initiative or hitting opponents on the break, Germany can rip open any defensive set-up with their classic one-touch interplay, superb movement off the ball and technical finesse.

Top marksman...Klose

Miroslav Klose

Even at the grand old age of 35, the Lazio striker remains a sure source of goals and is Germany's most prolific marksman since Gerd Muller.

The Bundesliga winter break

The five-week mid-season shutdown is great for Germany's national team as it allows players to recharge their batteries and manage their physical resources more effectively. This means that the Bundesliga's star names come to the end of the season in better shape than most.

Reasons to be fearful

Poor defending

In marked contrast with past Germany teams, today's back line is prone to unforced errors, lapses in attention and poor marking.

An uneven squad

While over-endowed with top quality in midfield, there is a distinct lack of strength in depth in defence and up front. Injuries to key players in these departments could throw a major spanner in the works.

Low's blind spot with Stefan Kiessling

The Bayer Leverkusen striker, who was top scorer in the Bundesliga last term, must wonder what he has to do to earn a place in the squad. Ignored by Low for far too long, he would be a great back-up for Klose.

Great back-up...Kiessling

THE QUALIFIERS SWITZERLAND

In with the top seeds

Weak qualifying group proves a big advantage for the finals. By Brian Homewood

The good and the bad...Switzerland celebrate a goal against Iceland but surrendered a 4-1 lead to draw 4-4

Even allowing for the fact that theirs was arguably the easiest path to Brazil for any of the 31 teams who had to qualify, Switzerland's unbeaten campaign was impressive enough to lift them to seventh in the FIFA rankings and earn Ottmar Hitzfeld's side a place in the seeded pot at December's finals draw.

Having missed out on Euro 2012 after finishing below Montenegro, Switzerland made a perfect start this time with 2-0 victories away to Slovenia and at home to Albania.

The latter match, in Lucerne, was played in a stadium two-thirds full of Albania fans who jeered the home side's Kosovan-born Xherdan Shaqiri and Granit Xhaka relentlessly. In an added twist, Xhaka missed a fairly easy chance when the Swiss were 2-0 ahead, prompting television commentator Sasha Ruefer to suggest he was "presumably not happy at having to score against Albania".

Hitzfeld's team dropped their first points and conceded a first goal in a 1-1 draw at home to Norway. Mario Gavranovic broke the deadlock for Switzerland in the 79th minute, but they lost concentration and Brede Hangeland headed the equaliser from a corner two minutes later.

The coach also lost his cool as he showed the "*stinkefinger*" to the referee – an act for which he received a two-match ban.

In what was arguably the most crucial game of the group, Switzerland survived several near misses in a physical encounter in Iceland before winning 2-0 with goals from Tranquillo Barnetta and Gavranovic.

That was followed by two matches against Cyprus – a goalless draw away and 1-0 win in Geneva, in which the hosts had to wait until the last minute before substitute Haris Seferovic scored amid immense relief.

The home game against Iceland saw the Swiss produce some of their best and worst football. After racing into a commanding 4-1 lead they allowed their opponents to fight back for a 4-4 draw.

Two goals from Fabian Schaer gave them a 2-0 win in Norway, which meant victory in Albania would secure qualification for a third successive World Cup.

Shaqiri, Xhaka and a third Kosovan, Valon Behrami, along with Blerim Dzemaili and Admir Mehmedi who both hail from the Albanian region of Macedonia, had to endure further insults and jeering from the home crowd throughout the game in Tirana as the Swiss triumphed 2-1.

Shaqiri put them ahead in the 47th minute, having carried on despite suffering a hamstring injury in the first half. He was substituted shortly afterwards and later sidelined for six weeks – which left his club side, Bayern Munich, far from happy. Michael Lang added a second to book the tickets to Brazil.

A 1-0 home victory over Slovenia put the icing on the cake as Switzerland ended Group E unbeaten. **WS**

For the record

QUALIFYING CAMPAIGN GROUP E

07.09.12	Slovenia (a)	2-0
11.09.12	Albania (h)	2-0
12.10.12	Norway (h)	1-1
16.10.12	Iceland (a)	2-0
23.03.13	Cyprus (a)	0-0
08.06.13	Cyprus (h)	1-0
06.09.13	Iceland (h)	4-4
10.09.13	Norway (a)	2-0
11.10.13	Albania (a)	2-1
15.10.13	Slovenia (h)	1-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Switzerland	10	7	3	0	17	6	24
Iceland	10	5	2	3	17	15	17
Slovenia	10	5	0	5	14	11	15
Norway	10	3	3	4	10	13	12
Albania	10	3	2	5	9	11	11
Cyprus	10	1	2	7	4	15	5

Players used in qualifiers

NINE
Gokhan INLER (810 mins), Ricardo RODRIGUEZ (810 mins), Steve VON BERGEN (810 mins), Valon BEHRAMI (755 mins), Xherdan SHAQIRI (746 mins), Granit XHAKA (745 mins), Blerim DZEMAILI (248 mins)

EIGHT
Diego BENAGLIO (720 mins), Stephan LICHTSTEINER (720 mins)

SEVEN
Johan DJOUROU (593 mins)

SIX
Valentin STOCKER (468 mins), Haris SEFEROVIC (447 mins), Tranquillo BARNETTA (330 mins)

FIVE
Eren DERDIYOK (303 mins)

FOUR
Admir MEHMEDI (141 mins), Gelson FERNANDES (46 mins)

THREE
Fabian SCHAER (270 mins), Mario GAVRANOVIC (192 mins), Philippe SENDEROS (128 mins), Josip DRMIC (87 mins)

TWO
Michael LANG (180 mins), Yann SOMMER (180 mins), Timm KLOSE (2 mins)

ONE
Reto ZIEGLER (90 mins), Innocent EMEGHARA (45 mins), Pajtim KASAMI (19 mins)

SCORERS IN QUALIFIERS

THREE GOALS
Fabian SCHAER

TWO
Mario GAVRANOVIC, Gokhan INLER Stephan LICHTSTEINER, Xherdan SHAQIRI, Granit XHAKA

ONE
Tranquillo BARNETTA, Blerim DZEMAILI, Michael LANG, Haris SEFEROVIC

The coach

Success story...Hitzfeld

Ottmar Hitzfeld

The German led Switzerland to the 2010 World Cup, where they were knocked out in the first round, and is one of Europe's most successful club coaches, having won the Champions League with both Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund, and claiming a total of seven Bundesliga titles. He will stand down after next summer's tournament.

The key players

Xherdan Shaqiri

The 23-year-old is deadly from long range with his left foot and has a wonderful ability to weave his way past opponents and thread passes between defenders.

Defence splitter...Shaqiri

Stephan Lichtsteiner

Never one to shy away from a confrontation, the feisty right-back's boundless energy and forays upfield for both club side Juventus and Switzerland have made him hugely influential.

Lion-hearted...Inler

Gokhan Inler

Turned up for his presentation at Napoli wearing a lion mask, but there is more to the 29-year-old than his fearsome tackling and never-say-die attitude. His long-range passing, shooting from distance and surging runs make him the complete midfielder.

Dangerous raider...Lichtsteiner

The unanswered questions

Further afield...playing in Tunisia

Can they cope away from home?

The Swiss have very little experience of playing outside Europe and have ventured further only three times in the last decade: the 2010 World Cup and friendlies against Tunisia and Morocco. Their last South America trip was in 1985.

Are their central defenders up to it?

Switzerland have a good defensive record but central defenders Philippe Senderos, Johan Djourou and Steve Von Bergen have all had tough times in their club careers.

Is the team boring?

Like the country itself, the idea of Swiss football does not exactly get the pulse racing and many feel they will be one of a number of faceless European teams cluttering up the tournament. However, Switzerland have players with flair and from varying backgrounds, making them possibly one of Europe's more intriguing teams.

Reasons to be cheerful

Vibrant young players

Considering the size of the country, Switzerland have one of the most productive youth development programmes in Europe. Striker Haris Seferovic and defender Fabian Schaer are the latest to make an impact, scoring important goals in the qualifiers.

Graduate...Seferovic

Top-level experience

The vast majority of the squad are performing impressively in Europe's biggest leagues. Napoli have a nucleus of Swiss players and Shaqiri featured regularly in Bayern Munich's treble-winning team last season.

Not afraid to mix it

The Swiss in general have a reputation for being quiet and reserved – but that does not go for the national team, who showed in the 1-0 win over Brazil that they won't be bullied by bigger teams. Lichtsteiner and Inler, in particular, like a feisty confrontation.

Reasons to be fearful

Lapses in concentration

They have shown alarming lapses which could be costly against more demanding opponents. Squandering a 4-1 lead at home to Iceland was one of several examples.

Profligacy

Switzerland often need an awful lot of chances to score a goal. Their forwards managed only three goals between them in the qualifiers and their top scorer was central defender Fabian Schaer with three goals.

Flattered by their group

Switzerland have not been tested against one of the world's top teams in a competitive game since they beat Spain 1-0 at the 2010 World Cup. Their qualifying group this time round was embarrassingly weak.

LA LIGA SQUADS 2013-14

(Ages correct as of 18.10.13)

ALMERIA

GOALKEEPERS

1	ESTEBAN	(38) 27.06.75
25	Oscar USTARI (Arg)	(27) 03.07.86

DEFENDERS

18	CHRISTIAN Fernandez	(28) 15.10.85
14	Raul GARCIA	(23) 30.11.89
22	NELSON (Por)	(30) 10.06.83
4	Hernan PELLERANO (Arg)	(29) 04.06.84
3	Marcelo SILVA (Uru)	(24) 21.03.89
2	Marco TORSIGLIERI (Arg)	(25) 12.01.88
5	Angel TRUJILLO	(26) 08.09.87

MIDFIELDERS

31	Ramon AZEEZ (Nga)	(20) 12.12.92
11	Helder BARBOSA (Por)	(26) 25.05.87
15	CORONA	(32) 12.02.81
16	Sebastian DUBARBIER (Arg)	(27) 19.02.86
29	KIM Young-gyu (SKo)	(18) 05.01.95
20	RAFITA	(31) 18.09.82
23	Fernando SORIANO	(34) 24.09.79
6	Marcos TEBAR	(27) 07.02.86
7	VERZA	(27) 29.09.86

FORWARDS

9	Oscar DIAZ	(29) 24.04.84
10	RODRI	(23) 06.06.90
17	SUSO	(19) 19.11.93
8	Aleix VIDAL	(24) 21.08.89
33	Jonathan ZONGO (BuF)	(20) 02.12.92

COACH

	FRANCISCO Rodriguez	(35) 17.06.78

ATHLETIC BILBAO

GOALKEEPERS

13	Iago HERRERIN	(25) 25.01.88
1	Gorka IRAIZOZ	(32) 06.03.81

DEFENDERS

12	Unai ALBIZUA	(24) 18.01.89
24	Mikel BALENZIAGA	(25) 29.02.88
23	Borja EKIZA	(25) 06.03.88
15	Andoni IRAOLA	(31) 22.06.82
4	Aymeric LAPORTE (Fra)	(19) 27.05.94
6	Mikel SAN JOSE	(24) 30.05.89

MIDFIELDERS

7	BENAT	(26) 19.02.87
10	Oscar DE MARCOS	(24) 14.04.89
16	Xabier ETXEITA	(25) 31.10.87
18	Carlos GURPEGI	(33) 19.08.80
21	Ander HERRERA	(24) 14.08.89
8	Ander ITURRASPE	(24) 08.03.89
5	Erik MORAN	(22) 25.05.91
17	Mikel RICO	(28) 01.11.84
22	Enric SABORIT	(21) 27.04.92
14	Markel SUSAETA	(25) 14.12.87
2	Gaizka TOQUERO	(29) 09.08.84

FORWARDS

20	Aritz ADURIZ	(32) 11.02.81
11	Ibai GOMEZ	(23) 11.11.89
19	Iker MUNIAIN	(20) 19.12.92
9	Kike SOLA	(27) 25.02.86

COACH

	Ernesto VALVERDE	(49) 09.02.64

ATLETICO MADRID

GOALKEEPERS

1	Daniel ARANZUBIA	(34) 18.09.79
13	Thibaut COURTOIS (Blg)	(20) 11.05.92

DEFENDERS

12	Toby ALDERWEIRELD (Blg)	(24) 02.03.89
18	Jose GIMENEZ (Uru)	(18) 20.01.95
2	Diego GODIN (Uru)	(27) 16.02.86
22	Emiliano INSUA (Arg)	(24) 07.01.89
3	Filipe LUIS (Bra)	(28) 09.08.85
17	Javi MANQUILLO	(19) 05.05.94
23	MIRANDA (Bra)	(29) 07.09.84

MIDFIELDERS

10	ARDA Turan (Tur)	(26) 30.01.87
14	GABI	(30) 10.07.83
8	Raul GARCIA	(27) 11.07.86
15	Josuha GUILAVOGUI (Fra)	(23) 19.09.90
20	JUANFRAN	(28) 09.01.85
6	KOKE	(21) 08.01.92
11	Cristian RODRIGUEZ (Uru)	(28) 30.09.85
4	Mario SUAREZ	(26) 24.02.87
5	TIAGO (Por)	(32) 02.05.81
16	Oliver TORRES	(18) 10.11.94

FORWARDS

7	ADRIAN Lopez	(25) 08.01.88
21	Leo BAPTISTAO (Bra)	(21) 26.08.92
19	Diego COSTA	(25) 07.10.88
9	David VILLA	(31) 03.12.81

COACH

	Diego SIMEONE (Arg)	(43) 28.04.70

BARCELONA

GOALKEEPERS

25	Oier OLAZABAL	(24) 14.09.89
13	Jose PINTO	(37) 15.11.75
1	Victor VALDES	(31) 14.01.82

DEFENDERS

18	Jordi ALBA	(24) 21.03.89
22	Daniel ALVES (Bra)	(30) 06.05.83
21	ADRIANO (Bra)	(28) 26.10.84
15	Marc BARTRA	(22) 15.01.91
14	Javier MASCHERANO (Arg)	(29) 08.06.84
2	Martin MONTOYA	(22) 14.04.91
3	Gerard PIQUE	(26) 02.02.87
5	Carles PUYOL	(35) 13.04.78

MIDFIELDERS

16	Sergio BUSQUETS	(25) 16.07.88
4	Cesc FABREGAS	(26) 04.05.87
8	Andres INIESTA	(29) 11.05.84
24	Sergi ROBERTO	(21) 07.02.92
17	Alexandre SONG (Cam)	(26) 09.09.87
6	XAVI	(33) 25.01.80

FORWARDS

19	Ibrahim AFELLAY (Hol)	(27) 02.04.86
23	Isaac CUENCA	(22) 27.04.91
12	Jonathan DOS SANTOS (Mex)	(23) 26.04.90
10	Lionel MESSI (Arg)	(26) 24.06.87
11	NEYMAR (Bra)	(21) 05.02.92
7	PEDRO	(26) 28.07.87
9	Alexis SANCHEZ (Chl)	(24) 19.12.88
20	Cristian TELLO	(22) 19.08.91

COACH

	Gerardo MARTINO (Arg)	(50) 20.11.62

CELTA VIGO

GOALKEEPERS

1	Sergio ALVAREZ	(27) 03.08.86
26	Ruben BLANCO	(18) 25.07.95
13	YOEL	(25) 28.08.88

DEFENDERS

15	Jon AURTENETXE	(21) 03.01.92
16	Carlos BELLVIS	(28) 24.04.85
22	Gustavo CABRAL (Arg)	(28) 14.10.85
30	David COSTAS	(18) 26.03.95
3	Andreu FONTAS	(23) 14.11.89
19	JOHNY	(19) 03.03.94
2	Hugo MALLO	(22) 22.06.91
21	SAMUEL	(28) 26.04.85

MIDFIELDERS

24	Augusto FERNANDEZ (Arg)	(27) 10.04.86
23	Michael KROHN-DEHLI (Den)	(30) 06.06.83
8	Alex LOPEZ	(25) 11.01.88
17	Levy MADINDA (Gab)	(21) 11.06.92
4	Borja OUBINA	(31) 17.05.82
12	RAFINHA (Bra)	(20) 12.02.93
20	TONI	(23) 04.04.90
6	Jonathan VILA	(27) 06.03.86

FORWARDS

9	Mario BERMEJO	(35) 07.10.78
11	CHARLES (Bra)	(29) 04.04.84
29	Santi MINA	(17) 07.12.95
10	NOLITO	(27) 15.10.86
14	Fabian ORELLANA (Chl)	(27) 27.01.86
18	David RODRIGUEZ	(27) 14.02.86

COACH

	Luis ENRIQUE	(43) 08.05.70

ELCHE

GOALKEEPERS

1	MANU Herrera	(32) 29.09.81
13	TONO	(33) 17.12.79

DEFENDERS

21	Edu ALBACAR	(33) 16.11.79
3	Alberto BOTIA	(24) 27.01.89
23	Domingo CISMA	(31) 09.02.82
26	Charlie I'ANSON (Eng)	(20) 01.07.93
4	David LOMBAN	(26) 05.06.87
18	Sergio PELEGRIN	(34) 18.04.79
19	Cristian SAPUNARU (Rom)	(29) 05.04.84
2	Damian SUAREZ (Uru)	(25) 27.04.88

MIDFIELDERS

16	FIDEL	(23) 27.10.89
10	Javi FLORES	(27) 09.02.86
20	David GENERELO	(31) 11.08.82
8	Sergio MANTECON	(33) 08.06.80
17	Javi MARQUEZ	(27) 11.05.86
6	Ruben PEREZ	(24) 26.04.89
5	Alberto RIVERA	(35) 19.02.78
24	Carlos SANCHEZ (Col)	(27) 06.02.86
22	Miroslav STEVANOVIC (Bos)	(23) 29.07.90

FORWARDS

7	AARON Niguez	(24) 26.04.89
27	ALVARO Gimenez	(22) 19.05.91
9	Richmond BOAKYE (Gha)	(20) 28.01.93
11	CORO	(30) 05.01.83
14	Manu DEL MORAL	(29) 25.02.84
15	Carles GIL	(20) 22.11.92

COACH

	Fran ESCRIBA	(48) 03.05.65

ESPANYOL

GOALKEEPERS

13	Francisco CASILLA	(27) 02.10.86
1	GERMAN Parreno	(20) 16.02.93

DEFENDERS

17	Victor ALVAREZ	(20) 14.03.93
11	Joan CAPDEVILA	(35) 03.02.78
28	Carlos CLERC	(21) 21.02.92
19	Diego COLOTTO (Arg)	(32) 03.10.81
18	Juan FUENTES	(23) 05.01.90
2	Felipe MATTIONI (Bra)	(25) 15.10.88
15	Hector MORENO (Mex)	(25) 17.01.88
3	Raul RODRIGUEZ	(26) 22.09.87
6	SIDNEI (Bra)	(24) 23.08.89

MIDFIELDERS

23	ABRAHAM Gonzalez	(28) 16.07.85
22	Alex FERNANDEZ	(21) 15.10.92
12	Manu LANZAROTE	(29) 20.01.84
14	David LOPEZ	(24) 09.10.89
16	Javi LOPEZ	(27) 21.01.86
4	Víctor SANCHEZ	(26) 08.09.87
20	SIMAO Sabrosa (Por)	(33) 31.10.79
5	Sergio TEJERA	(23) 28.05.90
25	Gabriel TORJE (Rom)	(23) 22.11.89

FORWARDS

7	Thievy BIFOUMA (Fra)	(21) 13.05.92
24	Jhon CORDOBA (Col)	(20) 10.05.93
9	Sergio GARCIA	(30) 09.06.83
10	PIZZI (Por)	(24) 06.10.89
8	Christian STUANI (Uru)	(27) 12.10.86

COACH

	Javier AGUIRRE (Mex)	(54) 01.12.58

GETAFE

GOALKEEPERS

13	Jordi CODINA	(31) 27.04.82
1	Miguel Angel MOYA	(29) 02.04.84

DEFENDERS

2	ALEXIS Ruano	(28) 04.08.85
12	Alvaro ARROYO	(25) 22.07.88
18	Sergio ESCUDERO	(24) 02.09.89
3	Roberto LAGO	(28) 30.08.85
4	Lisandro LOPEZ (Arg)	(24) 01.09.89
6	Alberto LOPO	(33) 05.05.80
15	RAFA	(28) 09.04.85
20	Juan VALERA	(28) 21.12.84

MIDFIELDERS

23	Borja FERNANDEZ	(32) 14.01.81
10	Jaime GAVILAN	(28) 12.05.85
5	Mehdi LACEN (Alg)	(29) 15.03.84
7	Angel LAFITA	(29) 07.08.84
14	Pedro LEON	(26) 24.11.86
21	MICHEL	(27) 09.11.85
24	Pedro MOSQUERA	(25) 21.04.88
22	Juan RODRIGUEZ	(31) 01.04.82
8	Pablo SARABIA	(21) 11.05.92

FORWARDS

17	Diego CASTRO	(31) 02.07.82
11	Adrian COLUNGA	(28) 17.11.84
9	Ciprian MARICA (Rom)	(28) 02.10.85

COACH

	Luis GARCIA	(40) 01.12.72

GRANADA

GOALKEEPERS

35	Stole DIMITRIEVSKI (Mac)	(19) 23.12.93
1	Orestis KARNEZIS (Gre)	(28) 11.07.85
13	ROBERTO	(34) 25.01.79

DEFENDERS

16	Brayan ANGULO (Col)	(23) 02.11.89
6	Matias CAMPOS (Chl)	(24) 22.06.89
15	Pape DIAKHATE (Sen)	(29) 21.06.84
22	Dimitri FOULQUIER (Fra)	(20) 23.03.93
5	Diego MAINZ	(30) 29.12.82
24	Jeison MURILLO (Col)	(21) 27.05.92
2	Allan NYOM (Cam)	(25) 10.05.88

MIDFIELDERS

11	Dani BENITEZ	(26) 07.04.87
10	Yacine BRAHIMI (Alg)	(23) 08.02.90
12	Diego BUONANOTTE (Arg)	(25) 19.04.88
19	Alexandre COEFF (Fra)	(21) 20.02.92
28	Mohammed FATAU (Gha)	(23) 25.04.90
27	Alvaro GARCIA	(20) 27.10.92
26	Migue GARCIA	(22) 17.04.91
18	Manuel ITURRA (Chl)	(29) 23.06.84
23	Michael PEREIRA (Fra)	(25) 08.12.87
14	RECIO	(22) 11.01.91
4	Fran RICO	(26) 03.08.87
8	Hassan YEBDA (Alg)	(29) 14.05.84

FORWARDS

9	Youssef EL ARABI (Mor)	(26) 03.02.87
7	Odion IGHALO (Nga)	(24) 16.06.89
20	PITI	(32) 26.05.81
21	RIKI	(33) 11.08.80

COACH

	Lucas ALCARAZ	(47) 21.06.66

LEVANTE

GOALKEEPERS

13	Javi JIMENEZ	(26) 08.06.87
1	Keylor NAVAS (CR)	(26) 15.12.86

DEFENDERS

12	JUANFRAN	(37) 15.07.76
15	Nikos KARABELAS (Gre)	(28) 20.12.84
22	Christian LELL (Ger)	(29) 29.08.84
19	Pedro LOPEZ	(30) 01.01.83
4	David NAVARRO	(33) 25.05.80
5	Hector RODAS	(25) 07.03.88
6	Loukas VYNTRA (Gre)	(32) 05.02.81

MIDFIELDERS

23	Pape DIOP (Sen)	(27) 19.03.86
16	Issam EL ADOUA (Mor)	(26) 09.12.86
8	Nabil EL ZHAR (Mor)	(27) 27.08.86
11	Ruben GARCIA	(20) 14.07.93
2	Remi GOMIS (Sen)	(29) 14.02.84
27	Jose Marco HIGON	(22) 22.05.91
21	Andreas IVANSCHITZ (Aut)	(30) 15.10.83
14	Miguel PALLARDO	(27) 05.06.86
18	Sergio PINTO (Por)	(33) 16.10.80
20	Pedro RIOS	(31) 12.12.81
24	SIMAO Mate (Moz)	(25) 23.07.88
17	Jordi XUMETRA	(27) 24.10.85

FORWARDS

9	ANGEL Rodriguez	(26) 26.04.87
7	David BARRAL	(30) 10.05.83
10	Baba DIAWARA (Sen)	(25) 05.01.88
3	Aloys NONG (Cam)	(30) 16.10.83

COACH

	Joaquin CAPARROS	(58) 15.10.55

MALAGA

GOALKEEPERS

13	Wilfredo CABALLERO (Arg)	(32) 28.09.81
1	Carlos KAMENI (Cam)	(29) 18.02.84

DEFENDERS

15	Marcos ANGELERI (Arg)	(30) 07.04.83
5	Vitorino ANTUNES (Por)	(26) 01.04.87
20	Jose Manuel CASADO	(27) 09.08.86
23	Roberto CHEN (Pan)	(19) 24.05.94
2	Jesus GAMEZ	(28) 10.04.85
21	Sergio SANCHEZ	(27) 03.04.86
3	WELIGTON (Bra)	(34) 26.08.79

MIDFIELDERS

10	Bobley ANDERSON (IvC)	(21) 03.03.92
6	Ignacio CAMACHO	(23) 04.05.90
30	Sergi DARDER	(19) 22.12.93
17	DUDA (Por)	(33) 27.06.80
18	ELISEU (Por)	(30) 01.10.83
4	Flavio FERREIRA (Por)	(21) 19.10.91
14	Pedro MORALES (Chl)	(28) 25.05.85
8	Francisco PORTILLO	(23) 13.06.90
12	Fernando TISSONE (Arg)	(27) 24.07.86

FORWARDS

7	Mounir EL HAMDAOUI (Mor)	(29) 14.07.84
16	JUANMI	(20) 20.05.93
28	Fabrice OLINGA (Cam)	(17) 12.05.96
19	Bartlomiej PAWLOWSKI (Pol)	(20) 13.11.92
24	SAMU	(23) 13.07.90
9	Roque SANTA CRUZ (Par)	(32) 16.08.81

COACH

	Bernd SCHUSTER (Ger)	(53) 22.12.59

OSASUNA

GOALKEEPERS

13	Andres FERNANDEZ	(26) 17.12.86
1	Asier RIESGO	(30) 06.10.83

DEFENDERS

14	Alejandro ARRIBAS	(24) 01.05.89
2	Marc BERTRAN	(31) 22.05.82
24	DAMIA	(31) 15.04.82
6	Ion ECHAIDE	(25) 05.01.88
4	Miguel FLANO	(29) 19.08.84
5	LOLO	(29) 22.08.84
22	Jordan LOTIES (Fra)	(29) 05.08.84
3	Joan ORIOL	(26) 05.11.86
15	Oier SANJURJO	(27) 25.05.86
12	Eneko SATRUSTEGUI	(23) 25.09.90

MIDFIELDERS

9	Emiliano ARMENTEROS (Arg)	(27) 18.01.86
16	Alvaro CEJUDO	(29) 29.01.84
8	Miguel DE LAS CUEVAS	(27) 19.06.86
23	Raoul LOE (Cam)	(24) 31.01.89
10	Patxi PUNAL	(38) 06.09.75
20	Francisco SILVA (Chl)	(27) 11.02.86
11	SISI	(27) 22.04.86
21	Roberto TORRES	(24) 07.03.89

FORWARDS

7	NINO	(33) 10.06.80
17	Jose Ariel NUNEZ (Par)	(25) 12.09.88
18	Manuel ONWU	(25) 11.01.88
19	Oriol RIERA	(27) 03.07.86

COACH

	Javi GRACIA	(43) 01.05.70

RAYO VALLECANO

GOALKEEPERS

1	David COBENO	(31) 06.04.82
13	RUBEN	(29) 22.06.84

DEFENDERS

21	Anaitz ARBILLA	(26) 15.05.87
17	Leonel GALEANO (Arg)	(22) 02.08.91
5	Alex GALVEZ	(24) 06.06.89
3	Nacho MARTINEZ	(24) 07.03.89
26	Johan MOJICA (Col)	(21) 21.08.92
6	RODRI	(29) 17.08.84
2	TITO	(28) 11.07.85
18	ZE CASTRO (Por)	(30) 13.01.83

MIDFIELDERS

4	Raul BAENA	(24) 02.03.89
9	Jose CARLOS	(26) 17.07.87
27	Christian CUEVA (Per)	(21) 23.11.91
32	Adri EMBARBA	(21) 07.05.92
24	Iago FALQUE	(23) 04.01.90
8	Adrian GONZALEZ	(25) 25.05.88
22	Saul NIGUEZ	(18) 21.11.94
14	Alberto PEREA	(23) 16.05.90
10	Roberto TRASHORRAS	(32) 28.02.81
19	Jonathan VIERA	(23) 21.10.89

FORWARDS

7	Lass BANGOURA (Gui)	(21) 30.03.92
23	Alberto BUENO	(25) 20.03.88
11	Nery CASTILLO (Mex)	(29) 13.06.84
25	Sebastian FERNANDEZ (Uru)	(28) 23.05.85
20	Joaquin LARRIVEY (Arg)	(29) 20.08.84

COACH

	Paco JEMEZ	(43) 18.04.70

REAL BETIS

GOALKEEPERS

1	Stephan ANDERSEN (Den)	(31) 26.11.81
13	Guillermo SARA (Arg)	(26) 30.09.87

DEFENDERS

4	Antonio AMAYA	(30) 31.05.83
2	Javier CHICA	(28) 17.05.85
12	DIDAC	(24) 09.06.89
25	Jordi FIGUERAS	(26) 17.05.87
23	NACHO	(33) 24.06.80
3	PAULAO (Bra)	(31) 06.08.82
15	Damien PERQUIS (Pol)	(29) 10.04.84
18	Markus STEINHOFER (Ger)	(27) 07.03.86

MIDFIELDERS

17	Juan CARLOS	(23) 30.03.90
20	Nosa IGIEBOR (Nga)	(22) 09.11.90
11	JUANFRAN	(25) 11.09.88
22	Cedric MABWATI (DRC)	(21) 08.03.92
5	Javier MATILLA	(25) 01.01.88
8	NONO	(20) 30.03.93
21	Lorenzo REYES (Chl)	(22) 13.06.91
14	Salva SEVILLA	(29) 18.03.84
6	Xavi TORRES	(26) 21.11.86
7	Alvaro VADILLO	(19) 30.11.93
10	Joan VERDU	(30) 05.05.83

FORWARDS

24	Ruben CASTRO	(32) 27.06.81
9	CHULI	(22) 25.01.91
19	Jorge MOLINA	(31) 22.04.82
16	Braian RODRIGUEZ (Uru)	(27) 14.08.86

COACH

	Pepe MEL	(50) 28.02.63

REAL MADRID

GOALKEEPERS

1	Iker CASILLAS	(32) 20.05.81
13	Jesus FERNANDEZ	(25) 11.06.88
25	Diego LOPEZ	(31) 03.11.81

DEFENDERS

17	Alvaro ARBELOA	(30) 17.01.83
15	Daniel CARVAJAL	(21) 11.01.92
5	Fabio COENTRAO (Por)	(25) 11.03.88
12	MARCELO (Bra)	(25) 12.05.88
18	NACHO Fernandez	(23) 18.01.90
3	PEPE (Por)	(30) 26.02.83
4	Sergio RAMOS	(27) 30.03.86
2	Raphael VARANE (Fra)	(20) 25.04.93

MIDFIELDERS

14	Xabi ALONSO	(31) 25.11.81
11	Gareth BALE (Wal)	(24) 16.07.89
16	CASEMIRO (Bra)	(21) 23.02.92
22	Angel DI MARIA (Arg)	(25) 14.02.88
24	Asier ILLARRAMENDI	(23) 08.03.90
6	Sami KHEDIRA (Ger)	(26) 04.04.87
19	Luka MODRIC (Vro)	(28) 09.09.85

FORWARDS

9	Karim BENZEMA (Fra)	(25) 19.12.87
23	ISCO	(21) 21.04.92
20	JESE	(20) 26.02.93
21	Alvaro MORATA	(20) 23.10.92
7	Cristiano RONALDO (Por)	(28) 05.02.85

COACH

	Carlo ANCELOTTI (Ita)	(54) 10.06.59

REAL SOCIEDAD

GOALKEEPERS

1	Claudio BRAVO (Chl)	(30) 13.04.83
13	Enaut ZUBIKARAI	(29) 26.02.84

DEFENDERS

20	Jose ANGEL	(24) 05.09.89
15	Ion ANSOTEGI	(31) 13.07.82
19	Liassine CADAMURO (Alg)	(25) 05.03.88
24	Alberto DE LA BELLA	(27) 02.12.85
22	Dani ESTRADA	(26) 03.01.87
3	Mikel GONZALEZ	(28) 24.09.85
2	Carlos MARTINEZ	(27) 09.04.86
6	Inigo MARTINEZ	(22) 17.05.91

MIDFIELDERS

5	Markel BERGARA	(27) 05.05.86
18	Gonzalo CASTRO (Uru)	(29) 14.09.84
4	Gorka ELUSTONDO	(26) 18.03.87
25	Esteban GRANERO	(26) 02.07.87
7	Antoine GRIEZMANN (Fra)	(22) 21.03.91
14	Ruben PARDO	(20) 22.10.92
10	Xabi PRIETO	(30) 29.08.83
23	Javi ROS	(23) 16.02.90
17	David ZURUTUZA	(27) 19.07.86

FORWARDS

9	Imanol AGIRRETXE	(26) 24.02.87
21	Diego IFRAN (Uru)	(26) 08.06.87
8	Haris SEFEROVIC (Swi)	(21) 22.02.92
11	Carlos VELA (Mex)	(24) 01.03.89

COACH

	Jagoba ARRASATE	(35) 22.04.78

SEVILLA

GOALKEEPERS

13	BETO (Por)	(31) 01.05.82
25	JULIAN	(22) 28.03.91
1	Javi VARAS	(31) 10.09.82

DEFENDERS

4	CALA	(23) 26.11.89
6	Daniel CARRICO (Por)	(25) 04.08.88
23	COKE	(26) 26.04.87
2	Federico FAZIO (Arg)	(26) 17.03.87
5	Diogo FIGUEIRAS (Bra)	(22) 01.07.91
30	ISRAEL	(20) 15.06.93
32	Alberto MORENO	(21) 05.07.92
3	Fernando NAVARRO	(31) 25.06.82
21	Nicolas PAREJA (Arg)	(29) 19.01.84

MIDFIELDERS

16	Denis CHERYSHEV (Rus)	(22) 26.12.90
27	Antonio COTAN	(18) 19.09.95
8	Sebastian CRISTOFORO (Uru)	(20) 23.08.93
17	JAIRO	(20) 11.07.93
7	Marko MARIN (Ger)	(24) 13.03.89
22	Stephane MBIA (Cam)	(27) 20.05.86
14	Bryan RABELLO (Chl)	(19) 16.05.94
11	Ivan RAKITIC (Cro)	(25) 10.03.88
19	Jose Antonio REYES	(30) 01.09.83
15	Piotr TROCHOWSKI (Ger)	(29) 22.03.84

FORWARDS

9	Carlos BACCA (Col)	(27) 08.09.86
18	Kevin GAMEIRO (Fra)	(26) 09.04.87
12	Vicente IBORRA	(25) 16.01.88
10	Diego PEROTTI (Arg)	(25) 26.07.88
24	Raul RUSESCU (Rom)	(25) 09.07.88
20	VITOLO	(23) 02.11.89

COACH

	Unai EMERY	(41) 03.11.71

VALENCIA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Diego ALVES (Bra)	(28) 24.06.85
13	Vicente GUAITA	(26) 18.02.87

DEFENDERS

19	Antonio BARRAGAN	(26) 12.06.87
20	Ricardo COSTA (Por)	(32) 16.05.81
22	Jeremy MATHIEU (Fra)	(29) 29.10.83
12	Joao PEREIRA (Por)	(29) 25.02.84
5	Victor RUIZ	(24) 25.01.89

MIDFIELDERS

10	Ever BANEGA (Arg)	(25) 29.06.88
14	Juan BERNAT	(20) 01.03.93
23	Sergio CANALES	(22) 16.02.91
28	Fede CARTABIA (Arg)	(20) 20.01.93
8	Sofiane FEGHOULI (Alg)	(23) 26.12.89
15	Javi FUEGO	(29) 04.01.84
18	Andres GUARDADO (Mex)	(27) 28.09.86
24	MICHEL	(25) 29.07.88
21	Daniel PAREJO	(24) 16.04.89
2	Pablo PIATTI (Arg)	(24) 31.03.89
6	Oriol ROMEU	(22) 24.09.91

FORWARDS

16	Paco ALCACER	(20) 30.08.93
7	JONAS (Bra)	(29) 01.04.84
11	Dorlan PABON (Col)	(25) 24.01.88
9	Helder POSTIGA (Por)	(31) 02.08.82

COACH

	Miroslav DUKIC (Ser)	(47) 19.02.66

VALLADOLID

GOALKEEPERS

1	JAIME	(32) 10.12.80
13	Diego MARINO	(23) 09.05.90

DEFENDERS

8	Javier BARAJA	(33) 24.08.80
3	Heinz BARMETTLER (DoR)	(26) 21.07.87
21	Zakarya BERGDICH (Mor)	(24) 07.01.89
24	Gilberto GARCIA (Col)	(26) 27.01.87
17	Carlos PENA	(30) 28.07.83
6	Jesus RUEDA	(26) 19.02.87
2	Antonio RUKAVINA (Ser)	(29) 26.01.84
4	Marc VALIENTE	(26) 29.03.87

MIDFIELDERS

20	Patrick EBERT (Ger)	(26) 17.03.87
11	Daniel LARSSON (Swe)	(26) 25.01.87
14	OMAR Ramos	(25) 26.01.88
10	OSCAR	(30) 12.11.82
22	Victor PEREZ	(25) 12.01.88
19	Valdet RAMA (Alb)	(25) 20.11.87
5	Fausto ROSSI (Ita)	(22) 03.12.90
18	Alvaro RUBIO	(34) 18.04.79
16	Lluis SASTRE	(27) 26.03.86

FORWARDS

9	Javi GUERRA	(30) 15.03.83
23	MANUCHO (Ang)	(30) 07.03.83
7	Humberto OSORIO (Col)	(25) 24.06.88

COACH

	Juan Ignacio MARTINEZ	(49) 03.06.64

VILLARREAL

GOALKEEPERS

1	Sergio ASENJO	(24) 28.06.89
25	Juan CARLOS	(26) 27.07.87
35	Aitor FERNANDEZ	(22) 03.05.91

DEFENDERS

16	Jose Antonio DORADO	(31) 10.07.82
29	Pablo INIGUEZ	(19) 20.01.94
18	JAUME	(25) 18.03.88
3	Bojan JOKIC (Sln)	(27) 17.05.86
2	MARIO	(22) 24.11.90
5	Mateo MUSACCHIO (Arg)	(23) 26.08.90
6	Aleksandar PANTIC (Ser)	(21) 11.04.92
20	Gabriel PAULISTA (Bra)	(22) 26.11.90

MIDFIELDERS

17	Javier AQUINO (Mex)	(23) 11.02.90
21	BRUNO	(29) 12.06.84
10	CANI	(32) 03.08.81
9	Giovani DOS SANTOS (Mex)	(24) 11.05.89
15	Francisco Javier FARINOS	(35) 29.03.78
27	Moi GOMEZ	(19) 23.06.94
11	Hernan PEREZ (Par)	(24) 25.02.89
4	Tomas PINA	(26) 14.10.87

FORWARDS

7	Jeremy PERBET (Fra)	(28) 12.12.84
24	Jonathan PEREIRA	(26) 12.05.87
14	Manu TRIGUEROS	(22) 17.10.91
8	Ikechukwu UCHE (Nga)	(29) 05.01.84

COACH

	MARCELINO	(48) 14.08.65

World Soccer's GREAT TEAMS

Senegal 2002

The World Cup debutants shocked the defending champions in the opening game of the tournament

History boys...Senegal's starting line-up for their first-ever World Cup game, against France in Seoul, in May 2002

Twelve years and three World Cups after Cameroon had stunned the football world with an opening-day defeat of holders Argentina at Italia 90, Senegal repeated the feat, in their first-ever finals, against a France side who began the 2002 tournament as red-hot favourites to retain their title.

Apart from the two reserve goalkeepers, the Senegal squad was composed entirely of players based in France. And under the guidance of their French coach Bruno Metsu, the "Lions of Teranga" were to provide further evidence of African football's growing stature in the world game.

Earlier in the year, Metsu's side had reached the African Nations Cup Final, where they lost on penalties to Cameroon. Then, in South Korea, they followed up their 1-0 win over France with two draws – against Denmark and Uruguay – to secure a place in the last 16, where they beat Sweden 2-1 with a "golden goal" from Henri Camara in extra time.

Senegal had matched Cameroon's record as the only African country to reach the quarter-finals of a World Cup, but their adventure finally came to an end with a 1-0 loss to Turkey.

Tired and nervous, Metsu's team were themselves beaten by a "golden goal" four minutes into extra time. WS

THE COACH AND HIS TEAM

Bruno Metsu

After a 12-year stint coaching in France, plus a brief spell in charge of Guinea, Metsu was put in charge of Senegal in February 2000.

Under the Frenchman, they were African Nations Cup runners-up prior to reaching the last eight of the World Cup. He later had several club jobs in the Middle East, and also coached the national teams of the UAE and Qatar.

Metsu died from cancer, aged 59, in October this year.

Tactics

Although Metsu liked to vary his formations, he had a tendency to pack his midfield with muscle as well as panache.

For the opening World Cup game against France, Cisse played in front of the back four, which allowed Bouba Diop and Diao to drive forward.

Fadiga, though erratic, offered composure and imagination, while up front Diouf had immense talent.

THE STARTING XI

Tony Sylva
Goalkeeper
He was outstanding against France, having played his way into the team at the African Nations Cup.

Ferdinand Coly
Defender
Played for Lens and, as an attacking full-back, he thrived under Metsu's style of play.

Lamine Diatta
Defender
Strong central defender who was born in Dakar but moved to France at the the aged of one.

Pape Malick Diop
Defender
Former captain who was chosen ahead of Pape Sarr and played all five games at the World Cup.

Omar Daf
Defender
Left-back who struggled to keep up with Thierry Henry in the opening game but improved during the finals.

Aliou Cisse
Defender
Captain who was a sweeper behind the midfield. Had good positional awareness and ball distribution.

Moussa N'Diaye
Midfielder
Played in all the group games but had to settle for the subs' bench in the competition's later stages.

Papa Bouba Diop
Midfielder
Scored the goal that beat France and finished as his side's top scorer with three goals in the tournament.

Salif Diao
Midfielder
A tower of strength, he scored and was sent off in the second group game, against Denmark.

Khalilou Fadiga
Midfielder
A powerful runner down the left flank, he could have played for Belgium before opting for Senegal.

El Hadj Diouf
Forward
Was voted African footballer of the year in 2001 and made a huge impact at the World Cup.

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